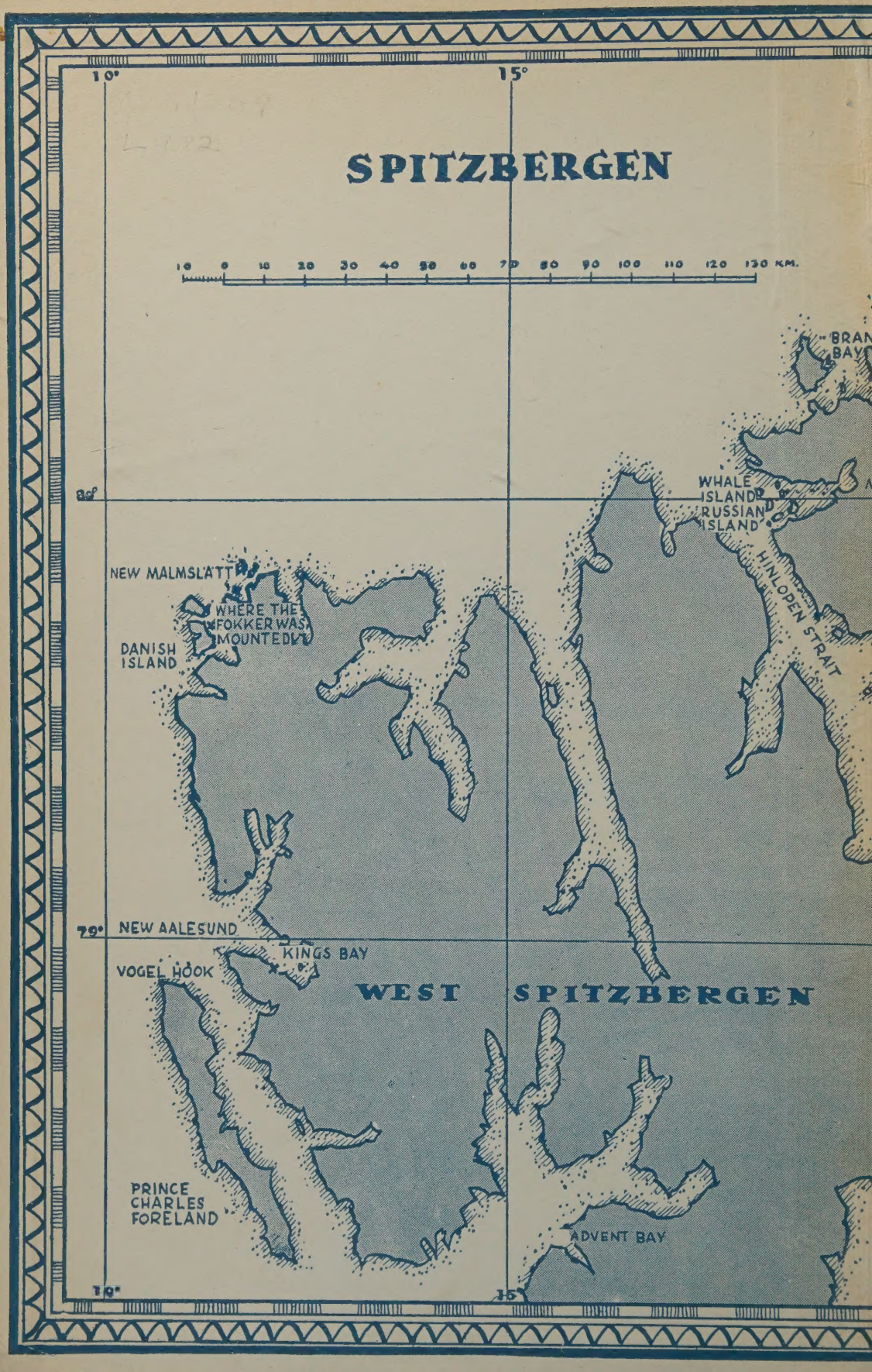
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DANISH ISLAND
NEW AALESUND
KINGS BAY
VOGEL HOOK
WEST SPITZBERGEN
PRINCE CHARLES FORELAND
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25°
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CAPE WREDE
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SIBERIA
ARCTIC OCEAN
NORTH POLE
FRANZ JOSEF LAND
BAFFIN BAY
KARA SEA
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BARENTS SEA
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Martin Birnbaum

Quentin Birchard

The Arctic Rescue

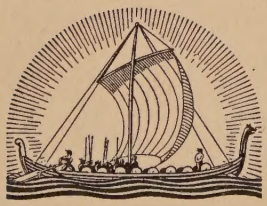
CAPTAIN EINAR LUNDBORG

The Arctic Rescue

HOW NOBILE WAS SAVED

By Einar Lundborg

CAPTAIN IN THE
SWEDISH AIR FORCE



TRANSLATED BY ALMA LUISE OLSON

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Publishers' Note

THIS is the tale of the gallant Swedish expedition to rescue the officers and crew of the *Italia*, the Italian dirigible that came to grief on the northern ice in May, 1928.

The climax of that effort was Lieutenant (now Captain) Lundborg's daring airplane flight to the isolated survivors, and his return to safety with General Nobile.

The aviator's dramatic adventures here related by himself, and the circumstances out of which they arose, will be more fully understood upon reference to the brief outline of the *Italia's* career as printed at the end of this book.

* * *

All but a few of the illustrations are from snapshots taken by Captain Lundborg himself or by other members of the Swedish expedition.

Foreword

TO the long list of *Italia* narratives which have already appeared in print, I herewith add another. I do not pretend to tell everything that happened around Spitzbergen during the summer of 1928, not even what happened to the Swedish Rescue Expedition. I only wish to describe what part I myself took in the events that last summer kept the entire world in suspense.

——Einar Lundborg

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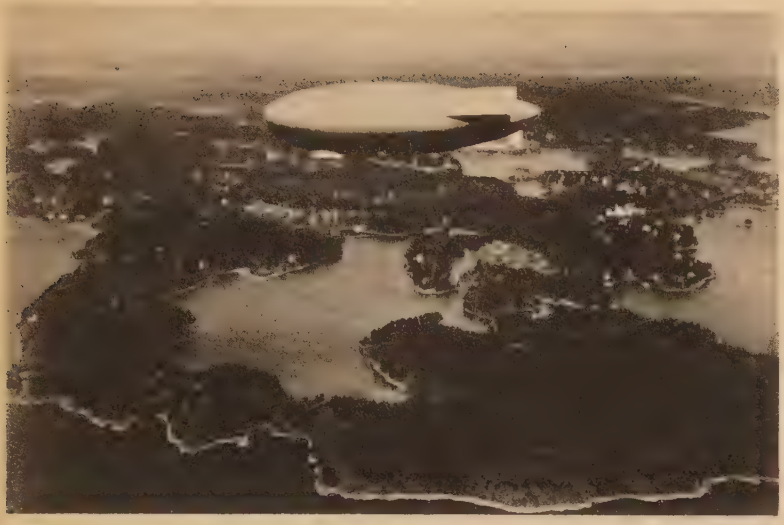
The Arctic Rescue



THE ITALIA OVER THE BALTIC COAST OF SWEDEN

CHAPTER I

With the *Italia* over the Baltic

THE *Italia* was about to pass over Sweden on its way toward Spitzbergen. This journey was the topic of conversation for the day among the fliers at the Malmslätt aviation field. When it comes to flying, we heavier-than-air pilots consider ourselves a little superior to our lighter-than-air comrades. None the less this journey with a dirigible toward the North Polar regions attracted our liveliest attention. Perhaps we are a bit envious of the dirigibles, which can stay in the air so much longer than our airplanes and which can repair their motor troubles without making a descent. And since, in addition, our own well-known Polar meteorologist, Finn Malmgren,

was on board, it was not to be wondered at that we talked a great deal about the *Italia* and its prospective flight north.

At 8 in the morning of the day the *Italia* was to pass over Swedish territory, we arrived as usual in our cars at the Malmslätt aerodrome, several miles outside Linköping, where most of the Malmslätt fliers live. Every one of us was eager to make a flight to the Baltic coast to see the airship.

I barely had time to step out of my motor car before I heard my name spoken by a comrade in the officers' mess. My squadron chief had ordered me by telephone to set out as quickly as possible toward the east to find and escort a dirigible which at 7:45 that morning had been seen over Oscarshamn on its way to the north. Since I was chief of the Third Air Corps pursuit planes and had a number of swift one-seated machines at my disposal, it was an easy matter for me to start immediately with my next-in-command, Adlercreutz, and two grey Nieuport pursuit planes to carry out the order.

From the start we flew at high speed. The weather was the best imaginable; the sun shone very warm, although the temperature otherwise was fairly low. Soon Linköping and Norrköping lay behind us, and the Baltic Sea coast could be seen like a silver ribbon along the horizon.

Could that be the *Italia*? I saw a cigar-shaped, dark object toward the southeast. Was it, perhaps, a ship or only an unusual cloud formation? I signalled to Adlercreutz, but he was apparently too preoccupied with his own search for the dirigible to glance toward me.

But all at once Adlercreutz changed his course of his own accord about 10-20 degrees toward the southeast and steered with the greatest speed toward the ship or the cloud or whatever it was. I decided to make a short cut for the object and therefore let Adlercreutz fly on his own. And some minutes later there was no longer any doubt but that this was actually the *Italia* for I could even see the shadow of the dirigible on the water. It was flying at an altitude of little more than a hundred yards.

GENERAL UMBERTO NOBILE

DR. FINN MALMGREN, THE SWEDISH METEOROLOGIST

Now it set out over the sea. Let us hope our Hispano motors will keep us from an unwelcome bath in the cold water! To save gasolene I slowed down the motor and changed the course in the direction of the Landsort Lighthouse. Some ten minutes later the route of the *Italia* converged upon mine. I flew very near the gondola but, although I went as slowly as possible, my speed was greater than the *Italia's*. One time when I was on its left side, quite near the front of the gondola, my greeting was answered: an arm upraised (after all, we were welcoming Fascists), with similar greetings and waving from Titina, the mascot familiar from earlier flights by Nobile. One of the crew held her in his arms and helped her answer my greetings—an unusual feat for a dog.

My aim had originally been to extend the escort as far as Stockholm, where probably other fliers, both military and civil, would join to give the dirigible and its meteorologist from Stockholm as magnificent a welcome as conditions permitted. But now, as often, there was a "but" in the way—the gasolene! When we had gone as far as Nynäshamn, I found it advisable to end the escort. While flying over Alnö I had noticed a little field where I thought it possible to make a landing. I therefore signalled to Adlercreutz to return a few miles to this field, where we landed. There we took on gasolene, and after an hour or two started on our way back to Malmslätt.

At that moment we felt the next thing to being heroes ourselves, since we would be able to go back and tell our comrades about the great grey-green air giant that calmly made its way over the water, about the name *"Italia"* in large black letters that we had seen on the body of the dirigible, and about the Italian man-of-war flag that flew from its stern.

Although the work for the day continued its usual course, still May 3 remained the *Italia's* day. By telephone from Stockholm we learned how other fliers had continued the escort just south of the capital and how Nobile had flown low over Mrs. Malmgren's villa in Äppelviken, while Malmgren threw down a farewell greeting to his mother. No doubt this was done in order to show one of the

THE ITALIA FLIES OVER STOCKHOLM, MAY 3, 1928

relatives of the North Polar group how safely and skilfully a dirigible could be navigated.

In the evening came the daily news by radio. We were told about the further flight of the airship toward northern Finland, where its strange zigzag course had attracted considerable attention.

Little by little in the days that followed the press told about the passing of the *Italia* over Vadsö and Björnö, the arrival at Kings Bay on Spitzbergen, the first long exploration tour, and so forth.

MOUNT TROMSDALSTIND, SOUTH OF TROMSÖ
As seen from the *Quest*

CHAPTER II

From Sweden to Spitzbergen

IN the middle of May, I was transferred to the training school for aerial marksmanship at Rinkaby in southern Sweden. The *Italia* and its preparations for the North Polar flight were soon forgotten for machine guns, scout flying, and the beautiful spring of our most southern province.

But suddenly during one of the last days in May interest in the Italian dirigible and its crew was revived: no trace of the *Italia* for ten hours, for twenty-four, for forty-eight! The worst was feared, and the press made a great ado over a possible catastrophe. Names of men that formerly had been mentioned only in passing appeared

in large bold type; events and details that had been forgotten, or at least had not caused surprise, became incomprehensible and scandalous. The *Italia* enterprise, which had been lauded universally as a great undertaking in the service of science, was criticized, the details probed, and severe judgments passed.

At the same time earnest attempts were made almost immediately to bring quick aid to the missing. And what was more natural than that the most modern means of communication of our day should be chosen for this purpose? But how to find those in distress? How relieve them, how organize the aid that seemed to be getting support from several countries? Instead of a unified leadership arose dissension. Especially because the Italian government took an attitude of reserve regarding help from other sources.

The Norwegians, however, were the first to start a relief expedition. Shortly afterwards our own government decided on Swedish participation. At first the plan was to use hydroplanes belonging to the Swedish air service as auxiliaries, and later this course of action was enlarged.

One day as we sat discussing the relative chances of success of different kinds of machines in such a relief expedition, the chief of the training school, Captain Gärdin, asked me, at the request of the commander-in-chief of the air service, if I would be willing to volunteer for the Swedish Spitzbergen expedition, in which probably also a land plane equipped with skis would be used.

The chief appointed for the Swedish expedition, Captain Tornberg, had been in Oslo conferring with Riiser-Larsen, and as a preliminary plan they had agreed that one land plane ought to be taken along. The matter was to be kept secret for the present, and outwardly it had to be so. But one's thoughts are not always easy to master. Interest in rules of marksmanship, in the speed of one's own plane and the "enemy's," in courses of study and other matters, waned considerably at the thought of a journey up to such northern and God-forsaken regions as the icy stretches of Spitzbergen.

Naturally I had answered yes. Who would have done otherwise? And instead of dreaming, as on former nights, about how

much fun it would be when my wife came down to spend the summer with me, I saw visions of jagged icy cliffs, polar bears, and a large mutilated airship.

And so on the 1st of June, as I was sitting down to dinner, the order came for me to leave the school and report immediately at Malmslätt for "certain preparations."

Surely this could be nothing less than a Spitzbergen journey, but still with carefully chosen words I had to ascertain by telephone from my chief, Major Björnberg, just what was up.

After my arrival at Malmslätt, I unfortunately found that so far nothing had been determined regarding Swedish participation—least of all about the use of a land plane. Orders from the highest quarters read that an airplane was to be put in order and that the crew was to prepare for an immediate departure. On Saturday morning the chief of the air corps, in conference with the manager of the Central Aerodrome at Malmslätt, Captain Koch, and some of his nearest associates, decided which machine should be put in order. To be sure the plane was as good as perfect, but now it was a case of equipping it for winter flying—and such winter flying! There were a thousand details to be changed, and the work that the aviation and mechanical engineers and labourers completed during these days deserves warm praise. On Sunday evening I was able to make my first test flight with the Fokker No. 31, and everything functioned to the best of satisfaction. In order to attain the greatest saving of time in reassembling, as well as to protect the plane from injury, some carpenters at Malmslätt built a huge crate of large beams; after twenty-four hours the machine was dismounted and, with all reserve parts and other equipment, packed into a couple of railway cars at the Malmslätt station.

Then finally came the awaited advance order regarding the transport of the air *matériel* to Spitzbergen, and by that the Fokker crew, composed of my scout, Lieutenant Schyberg, the two mechanics, Karlsson and Weibahr, and myself, understood that something was to happen.

The Fokker plane was to go by train to Gothenburg, there to

CAPTAIN E. TORNBERG, LEADER OF THE SWEDISH EXPEDITION

be transferred to a transport vessel, chartered by the government, the *Tanja,* which was to carry the air *matériel* direct to Spitzbergen. Both the seaplanes, Nos. 255 and 257, from the Second Air Corps in Stockholm, were to be flown to Gothenburg and there dismounted and loaded on the *Tanja.* We ourselves were ordered to leave for Stockholm on Wednesday night to complete our preparations there. We had not been able to get many things in Linköping, for naturally the shops in the capital are always better equipped than those of smaller towns. There, too, we were to confer with the men from the marine air service about what they had taken, in order that our equipment might be as similar as possible.

The night before my departure for Stockholm I had a remarkable dream. I saw a strange place and some strange men. The season was neither summer nor winter. There was neither light nor darkness, beauty nor ugliness. One of the men seemed to be Nobile. He came walking toward me, and I told him that I had arrived to take him from this strange place. And we two went away from the others.

More as a joke I boasted the following day about my dream. And among my Linköping acquaintances I bragged that I would surely get Nobile—in my dream I had seen both him and the place where he was to be found. To an Italian tourist visiting Linköping I also told my dream and told how sure I was of success. It was touching to see how he hoped for its realization and how he, as we said farewell to each other, besought for me the help of the Madonna.

* * *

In Stockholm it was rather wonderful to be able for once to choose handsome rucksacks, practical tents, warm sleeping-bags and other equipment without really needing to think of the cost. And among other equipment, the director of the Cloetta Chocolate Works in Ljungsbro, Lieutenant Hjalmar Svenfelt, had given each of us four Malmslätt fliers a large box of all kinds of sweets, from heavy and nourishing bars of chocolate to tasty and invigorating wafers.

LIEUTENANT BIRGER SCHYBERG ON THE QUEST

On Friday morning the various members of the expedition assembled at the headquarters of the Second Air Corps in Stockholm, where the chief of the expedition, Captain Tornberg, presented us to the Commander-in-Chief of the Air Forces. In addition to those present our physician, Doctor Huss, who was unable to attend this meeting, was to come later. Furthermore, during the railway journey up to Narvik the meteorologist of the expedition, Director Sandström, who at this time was busy climbing over the fjelds of Lapland hunting for precipitation centres, low pressure areas, and the like, was to join us.

In brief and pithy sentences Major-General Amundson bade us farewell. Among other things, he wanted to remind us that the whole world was now watching our work, not alone with interest but with great hopes. The Queen had asked him to give us her special best wishes.

The train from Stockholm, with the members of the expedition, was to depart on Friday evening at eight, and before that Lieutenant Schyberg and I, together with our wives, had a small festive farewell dinner. We have wonderful wives, Schyberg and I. They not only do not "mix up in our affairs," but without any interference whatever they let us do our service wholly according to our own judgment.

I might mention a little episode that occurred just before we arose from the table. One of the older Malmslätt fliers has a habit of exclaiming, when the time for good cheer arrives during or after a dinner:

"Drain well your glass,
For death awaits you!"

I do not recall having uttered those words before, so imagine my surprise when I found that these were the last words I said just before we rose from the table. In a way I did not attach any significance to the matter just then. But an airman is always a little superstitious, especially when one, like myself, has had two "incidents" during flights, both on the same day of the month. And

CAPTAIN LUNDBORG ON THE QUEST

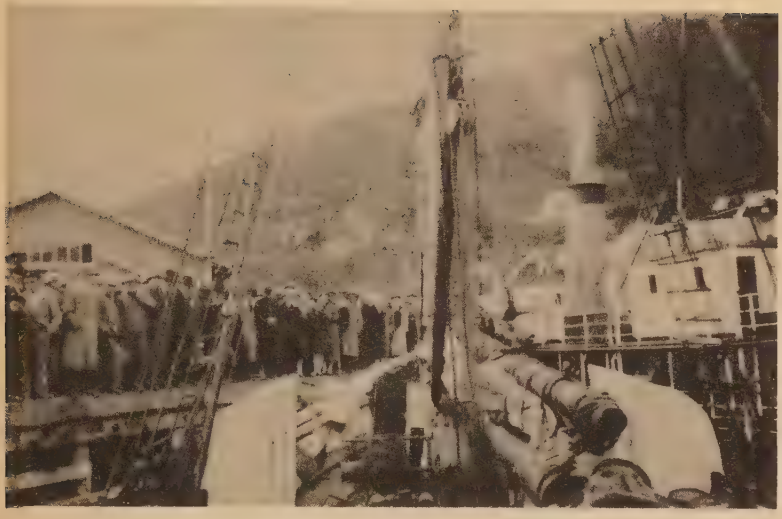
extraordinary as it may seem, my third accident, the one during the Spitzbergen expedition, occurred on a Monday too—the 24th.

Then came the time for farewell. I saw no tears, no sorrow—only joy and pride among all who had gathered at the Central Station in Stockholm to bid us farewell. Besides our nearest relatives, there were only a very few of our superiors present.

The train journey passed quickly. Now and then at the stations some acquaintance of one of our party was at hand to wish us good luck.

At midnight on the 10th of June, according to the time-tables, we were to cross the Arctic Circle. None of us had ever seen the midnight sun before. Our own astronomical calculations revealed that we could see it on this night, and so at about midnight we gathered to take a look at the phenomenon from the Polar Circle Station. And sure enough—due north, as if rolling along the horizon, we saw a dark red ball, which cast an eerie charm over the surrounding scenery. The midnight sun is beautiful to look upon when it lies low, but during our stay on Spitzbergen, when the sun at midnight was high in the heavens, we many times wished that we were back again in the magic twilight of our own land.

On Sunday, the 10th, our train arrived at Narvik at a quarter to twelve. Since the plan was to continue the journey to the north the same evening, with the *Quest*, a Norwegian whaler chartered by the Swedish government, to serve as the flagship of the expedition, it was of great importance for us immediately to claim our luggage. But no matter how we hunted and searched, the baggage car was gone. We telegraphed to Kiruna, to Boden, Långsele, and Stockholm, and not before the afternoon did we learn that the car had quite simply been uncoupled from our train at Jörn. Since we could not delay at Narvik longer than until evening—the *Quest* needed at least twelve hours in Tromsö to complete its crew and make arrangements regarding provisions, radio equipment, etc.—the whole matter was so planned that Lieutenant Christell, together with Corporal Örneklint, was to stay in Narvik and, in a hired motor boat or in some other suitable transport, follow as quickly as



THE DEPARTURE FROM NARVIK

possible to Tromsö with the contents of the baggage car when this finally arrived at Narvik.

The members of the expedition were received most cordially at Narvik by the director of the Kirunavaara Company, Mr. Lund. We were invited to a pleasant dinner in the charming Bromsgården, where the Swedish consul, too, was present.

From the very first we noticed how cool was the interest of the Norwegians, not alone in the *Italia* crew but in Italy and Italians in general. And unless I misunderstood the situation, this coolness was due to the old discords between Nobile and Amundsen and to the feeling among the Norwegians that they themselves should explore Polar regions, while the Italians might better limit their explorations to more southerly and therefore warmer regions.

And so at 10:30 in the evening, the *Quest* departed from Narvik. To be sure, we had pictured a small vessel with close quarters, crowded and uncomfortable; but that everything was to be as cramped as we found it to be, we had not dreamed.

On our first visit on board the *Quest*, some hours before sailing

WITH THE QUEST AT TROMSÖ

From left to right: Colour-Sergeant Svensson, Mechanic Weibahr, Welder Nilsson, Captain Tornberg, Dr. Huss, Corporal Örneklint, Radio Operator Enberg

ARCTIC SEA CAPS
From left to right: Schyberg, Huss, Christell, and the "Weather God"

from Narvik, we had found the vessel rather dirty, and since we ourselves, at least so far, were neatly dressed and fairly clean, it went a bit against the grain to bow our heads and step into the cabins or the gun room. We were all convinced, however, that we would get along excellently aboard, especially as the civilian commander of the vessel, Captain Schjelderup, seemed very obliging and, what was better, since he in every way inspired confidence.

With waving of hands from a large crowd of people on the quay, with the blowing of sirens by the ships lying in the harbour, the flagship of the expedition set out with the Norwegian flag flying from its mast. According to the law of the sea, this is a sign that an admiral is on board, but the chief of the expedition, Captain Tornberg, considered quite rightly that he was his own admiral for the time being.

So we went to sleep the first evening. Director Sandström, who had come direct to Narvik by another train, and I received private cabins, very small to be sure, but still private. The other men shared

DIVERSIONS ON BOARD THE QUEST
The phonograph plays *Nizhni-Novgorod*

cabins, two and two. The berths were barely long enough for us to find room in them, and their width permitted everyone, except possibly the Director, to lie on his back or stomach, but of extra space there was decidedly none.

At 11 in the morning we ate our first meal on board—broiled bacon and eggs. Captain Schjelderup, who had taken charge of the commissariat, explained apologetically that the food was not at its best because the kitchen boy had prepared it. A little before the departure of the *Quest*, the steward had chosen to appear on board drunk and it had taken not many seconds to restore both him and his luggage to mother earth. We were to get a new steward in Tromsö, and that this exchange by no means meant a loss for us will be shown more clearly as I continue my story.

The engineer was unfamiliar with the machinery, said Captain Schjelderup, and the *Quest* as a result did not make more than about five knots. Therefore we had ample time to admire the beautiful surroundings—steep cliffs, glittering fjords, high peaks of

IN THE GALLEY OF THE QUEST

fjelds, and along their slopes a number of foamy streams, which made their way down toward the sea like shining ribbons.

We met a large number of small fishing craft on their way home after more or less successful fishing expeditions to the Polar Sea. Captain Schjelderup explained that it is an old custom among all returning fishermen to touch at Tromsö for at least twenty-four hours. It is good form to celebrate there a little, whether one can afford it or not.

In the evening we arrived at Tromsö and put in at the Arctic quay, which is so situated that from it one can easily replenish one's stores for a longer or shorter stay in the Polar regions. Instead of serving dinner on board, Captain Schjelderup arranged a fine meal at the best restaurant of the town, and since this was apparently to be our last meal on land, we made a point of enjoying our food.

The time of departure for the *Quest* could not yet be determined since we did not know for sure when Christell was to arrive with the luggage.

We tarried on land until near midnight. It was a wonderfully beautiful night. In spite of the fact that it was about 12 P. M., the sun was high in the heavens and there was complete calm. A strange atmosphere hung over the harbour where the motors chugged, oars splashed, and cranes and winches rattled.

The next day we wandered about in Tromsö to complete our personal equipment. We found a kind of black shaggy skin cap, called a Polar Sea cap, such as all whalers wear. We bought some of them more because we thought we looked swanky in them than because we needed them, for we all had the excellent Swedish military fur caps. Sandström, however, whom we had christened the "Weather God," went out on his own and he found another kind of cap that I have since heard many call a "candy butcher's" cap. But the "Weather God" himself considered it an extra fine sailor "sheik's" cap. We also visited some shops where bear and other Polar furs were on sale, and we were advised to buy what we wanted at once, since in another week or so, with the beginning of the tourist stream, the prices would rise, as always. But, since we ourselves hoped to shoot some wild game during our prospective stay on Spitzbergen, a few purchases had to suffice.

In the evening arrived the *Olav Tryggvason*, a Norwegian passenger vessel belonging to the so-called express service between Bergen and Tromsö, also Christell and Örneklint and our baggage, which had finally turned up. The *Quest* was brought up and laid alongside the *Olav Tryggvason* and the luggage was transferred, whereupon our vessel again put in at the Polar quay. Now, at last, we were ready to depart, but since the radio equipment of the *Quest* was not yet completely installed, the departure was set for 12 o'clock midnight.

For this reason we ate still another last meal on land and arrived at the harbour in good time before the appointed hour. And now, although it was rainy and stormy and late at night, it was still so light that, as we discovered later, we were able to take photographs with success. The clock said twelve, the members of the expedition were assembled on board, but of the officers and crew of

THE POLAR QUAY AT TROMSÖ

The posters are advertisements from all parts of the world—civilization's last word

the vessel nothing was to be seen. The captain himself had gone on land to say good-bye to his brother, and since we knew only too well that such a "farewell" would not be completed in a very short time, we decided to wait patiently. Toward one o'clock the list of the crew was nearly filled, and at 1:15 on the night of the 13th of June the *Quest* departed in rain and lightning with Spitzbergen as the nearest goal.

The first night on board was fairly endurable. But toward morning we were awakened by the fact that the vessel rolled threateningly. As we looked around in the cabins, we found that the motion had rearranged the furniture considerably.

At Skjärvö we were to leave the Norwegian coast and turn out into the Arctic Sea. But the sea being much too rough, the captain decided that we should seek refuge there and seize the opportunity to repair the radio that had not performed to our satisfaction.

On Skjärvö lies a little community of the same name—some thirty houses, a church, apothecary shop, and bank—a typical north Norwegian fishing community, situated as if in a great bowl with high fjelds all around.

During the first days on the Polar Sea after we left Skjärvö, the wind was northeasterly and very strong. Since our course was north-northeast, sails were hoisted. They perhaps increased the speed, but above all they supported the vessel against rolling. These days we all stayed in our cabins most of the time. Seasickness had taken hold of us quite thoroughly. Only Doctor Huss was on his feet now and then, but from the first he had taken a remarkably good remedy against seasickness—atropin—which I hereby highly recommend. In spite of the heavy rolling our new steward, Haeggelund, piloted himself unerringly at all meal times to the gun room with every sort of tray and platter. Each time after he had waited in vain for some of us to come to the table to taste the food, it would wander untouched back to the kitchen again.

During the night before the 16th the wind rose to full storm. The first engineer asked the captain to let the vessel be brought to in order to ride out the storm, but Captain Schjelderup was

FULL STORM IN THE ARCTIC

stubborn and answered: "If we have gotten along before we'll get along now." It was not the first time that Schjelderup had been out in bad weather. This night the *Quest* made about 2 knots, and she rolled so terrifically that it defies all description. In my diary notes I find: "A very bad night."

At 6 in the morning I was awakened from a temporary sleep by a terrifying crash. It sounded as if someone had fired shot after shot from a cannon. I threw on my dressing gown and rushed up on deck to see what it was. The jigger sail had split, and it took the pilot, Jensen, and some of the crew a good while before they succeeded in reefing it.

Toward midday the wind died down somewhat, but since the sea was still very high and the waves were breaking over the deck and down into the engine room, it was difficult to keep up the fire under the boilers and thus make full speed.

At half past three in the afternoon we caught sight of the first pack ice. The cameras were now brought out and one ice floe after another was photographed. One of the crew watched us smilingly

and said: "If you are going to photograph all the ice you see during the next few hours, the hold of the *Quest* won't have room for all the films." True enough!

Some hours later we came in contact with the first compact drifting ice field with its typical glow, the so-called "ice glare," over it. From Captain Schjelderup we learned how this helps one to determine at a distance whether there is ice or open water ahead. This information was later very useful to me.

The ice that here appears as pack ice consists partly of old, as much as twenty-year-old, polar ice blocks—clear green-blue or grey-blue—and partly of one-year-old ice, and sometimes even of icebergs. These have been formed at the ends of the glaciers which crack and cast out into the sea large pieces which later follow the movements of the other ice.

The polar ice blocks in particular often took remarkable shapes. With a little imagination you could see in the large melting ice chunks the image of your wife or of your fox terrier or of anything on which your thoughts dwelt.

The night before, we had received word by radio that still another Swedish airplane, the *Uppland*, with Sergeant Nilsson as pilot and Lieutenant Karlsson as navigator, an Italian Dornier plane, and Amundsen in a French Latham plane were on their way to Spitzbergen. Since, according to our information, a flight over the Polar Sea was planned by these planes for that very day, we all discussed with great animation their prospects of success. We wondered if such a flight over the Polar Sea under prevailing wind and cloud conditions, ought to be attempted, for the weather was overcast with low hanging clouds and a strong northeasterly wind blew.

During the day there also came a radio report from the *Tanja*. Lieutenants Jacobsson and Rosensvärd, who accompanied this ship from Gothenburg, reported that they lay in a heavy sea between North Cape and Björnö.

In honour of the King's birthday, our chief sent a telegram of good wishes, and at supper we drank the health of His Majesty King Gustaf. Extra entertainment in the form of one drink per man

THE FIRST DRIFT ICE

CAPTAIN LUNDBORG IN "POLAR RIG" ON THE QUEST

was dealt out, not only to our own men but to the crew of the vessel.

Toward evening the engine was stopped for three hours, but thanks to the good and favourable wind we continued sailing at about four knots. The reason why the engine was stopped was the need for a thorough overhauling before we began the drive through the ice. Now at any time we might look for heavier pack-ice areas and since the engines would be tested very severely, Captain Schjelderup wanted to have everything shipshape in advance.

At one o'clock on the night of the 17th, we saw South Cape on Spitzbergen, or, better, a high fjeld some miles north of the cape itself. After the storm the weather was now very fine. The sun shone and the sight of the many ice belts, which to the north and south were massed into one whole, was extraordinarily beautiful.

From the ship, often at very close range, we could study the seals as they lay sunning themselves on the ice floes. It was so warm in the sunshine that they did not plunge down into the water until we were very near to them.

Sometimes we could see a full dozen on one and the same floe.

BUCKING THE DRIFT ICE
The *Quest* "casts its shadow before" as it attacks a large floe in its northward way

The only bird we had seen so far during the journey over the Polar Sea was the sea-gull, but now as we came nearer land, we began to see many auks and other birds. And with a little patience, if we directed our glance toward the water, we could see both salmon and herring, which apparently also wanted to get their share of the sunshine.

Now as we had to pass through fairly heavy pack-ice belts, the captain of the *Quest* left his homelike bridge and went up instead to the foremast, at the top of which he almost completely disappeared in a large crow's nest. The ship was piloted from there in such a way that the captain gave his commands directly to the helmsmen: hard to right; to left; hold her; full speed ahead; stop or slow down—whatever was suitable. And although there were two helmsmen, they still had a very strenuous task.

Although the *Quest* is not an ice-breaker, it yet was able to make its way through the heaviest pack ice. At first the captain naturally

tried to direct the ship through the lanes that are always found in pack ice, but since this could not always be done, the ship butted its prow against the ice floe that was in the way, and then the engine was set at full speed ahead. In this way ice floe after ice floe was shoved aside until there appeared open water enough for the *Quest* to pass through.

After leaving Tromsö none of us had given a thought to appearances, and beards and moustaches had become fairly long. This day, however, we instituted a general shaving. But we spared the moustaches, agreeing to let these grow in order to have something with which to surpise our wives when we returned home. But I may reveal now in advance that we did not keep it up. So far as Schyberg was concerned, he found one day when he looked into the mirror that the colour of his moustache did not suit him. This gave him a good excuse for shaving it off. As for Rosensvärd, I can say that even at a considerably later period of the expedition, his beard was fairly scant—but, then, he did not have a wife at home to surprise.

A gramophone that Captain Tornberg had received as a gift for the expedition from a Stockholm department store gave us great pleasure. From among the records we immediately chose "Nizhni-Novgorod" as the parade march of the expedition. Its unique rhythm and not unpleasant monotony we considered as a forewarning of prospective eventual joggings over the polar ice. The piece was played an unbelievable number of times, and when the disk was nearly worn out it took a lot of imagination to determine what really came wheezing out of the little box.

On this day we received news by radio from the *Uppland,* which still delayed in Tromsö, awaiting more favourable weather.

On the same day we were in direct radio communication with the *Città di Milano.* The chief's plan had originally been to go direct to Virgo harbour on the northwest point of Spitzbergen, but since Commander Romagna, the ship's commanding officer, preferred that we go in to Kings Bay, where he wanted to confer with us, the chief decided to comply with Romagna's request.

KINGS BAY

The hangar of the *Italia* and the coal mines at New Aalesund in the distance

The ice constantly grew heavier. Often we had to stop the engine and back and try again. Many times the *Quest* bumped with terrific force against a large ice floe. There was crashing and cracking in the whole body of the ship, and often we thought that it would spring a leak. But Captain Schjelderup said that a polar sloop like the *Quest* could stand much heavier blows.

The Norwegian news for the day, which we caught by radio, announced that Amundsen was to have started this very day from Bergen direct for Spitzbergen. Naturally all wished him the greatest possible success in his attempts, but it cannot be denied that we thought it would be annoying if he should get there ahead of us.

During the night before the 18th we came into a large pack-ice belt; there was constant backing and filling, and it took us more than an hour to force our way across a 200-yard stretch. For some hours, dressed only in my pyjamas, I stood on the bridge. The mid-

night sun shone so warmly that it was possible to appear without discomfort in this airy costume. One who has never seen an arctic summer midnight can scarcely imagine how enjoyable it is in every way. Besides, on this night there was absolute calm, which tended to increase the enjoyment of the midnight watch. From the moment the pack ice began to appear during our journey toward Spitzbergen, we had taken to our sun glasses. Without them, even at night, and, what is still more remarkable, even in fog, snow blindness often ensues. The crew taught us a good way to prevent this blindness in case sun glasses are not at hand. The trick is to make heavy, dark rings under the eyes with the help of coal, ink or dirt. Luckily we never needed to resort to this measure, but I mention it that others may profit by the information.

The following day we steered in toward Vogel Hook, the most northerly point of Prince Charles Foreland, in order to proceed to Kings Bay as soon as this headland came into sight. The fog that had arisen during the night now lay heavy, and therefore we made our way forward with soundings. If only the nautical chart had been dependable, this task would not have been so difficult, but since it was unreliable, not to say incorrect, we had to proceed with the greatest care.

Radio messages came in from the *Tanja*, which was then abreast of South Cape, but considerably farther west than the *Quest* had been when at the same latitude. The *Tanja* was, to be sure, reinforced against the ice, but it could under no conditions carry on such ice manœuvres as the *Quest*, wherefore the chief, in good time, before the *Tanja* could be counted on meeting the pack ice, ordered this vessel by radio to go farther west and outside the large compact drift-ice belts.

From either the *Uppland* or Amundsen's plane we had received no news this day and all hoped that the group had not started over the Polar Sea in the fog that now prevailed.

That morning our chief decided that the quater-deck had been badly scrubbed after the cleaning of the fish by the galley boy. Some of our own men were ordered to wash the deck; but it proved

THE CITTÀ DI MILANO AT KINGS BAY

To the left a typical Spitzbergen mountain, cone-shaped and eroded

THE ITALIA'S HANGAR AT KINGS BAY
In the background a mountain, its top hidden by clouds

that the order should not have been given. The one who took offence at it was the skipper on the schooner, Captain Schjelderup. During the dinner he came down into the gun room (in spite of our invitation he did not wish to take his meals with us), and, bowing in the doorway, said: "You have ordered your men to wash the quarter-deck, Mr. Captain. *My* men did it as early as 7:30 this morning." Another bow and he was off. We all became a bit disgruntled over this episode, the first of its kind so far. For we all had seen fish scales and the like on the quarter-deck.

After dinner, however, the chief straightened out this little difference excellently. Schjelderup explained, when the chief spoke of poor cleaning, that the crew of the vessel had not dared to scrub too strenuously, for fear they might disturb our pleasant morning sleep.

At 3 o'clock Vogel Hook suddenly appeared out of the fog. The outlines of the shore were scarcely discernible, but above and

through the fog gleamed the white tops of the fjelds. Large groups of birds of all kinds nearly hid the sun, which now began to shine through the fog. Even an hour before, from the increase in the number of birds, we had been able to conclude that we were nearing land.

After we had come east of the Foreland, the fog was almost gone; but out at sea to the west it still remained as heavy as before. From a relatively near distance we could now enjoy the magnificent view. Mighty pointed fjelds, close together, enormous glaciers, and uniquely shaped outlines of the shore formed a panorama that we never grew tired of studying.

So we steered into Kings Bay.

The fjord became narrower. On the sides we had fjelds and glaciers and high up in the fjord gleamed some strangely formed mountain tops like large reddish-brown leeks, which seemed to dominate the scene. Soon we could see the smoke from the coal mines and the *Città di Milano*. With the help of field-glasses we also immediately saw the Italian hangar, like a giant skeleton, rising behind a row of wooden huts between the coal mines and the harbour. And now we could clearly distinguish details such as coal winches, the railway tracks between the quay and the mine, the radio mast and the flagpole in the harbour with the Norwegian flag waving at the top.

ODD TYPES FROM THE CITTÀ DI MILANO
From left to right: a sailor, two Alpine chasseurs, an Italian journalist, and the officer of the day

CHAPTER III

Kings Bay

AT about 7 o'clock in the evening of June 18, we lay alongside the *Città di Milano*. We all knew that this mother-ship of the *Italia* was not a warship in the ordinary sense of the word, but a military transport ship. That we were going to find so variegated an assembly of people on deck was something none of us had dreamed. It was almost as if we had come to Hollywood. Several motion-picture cameras were directed toward us by what seemed to be more or less fantastically dressed individuals. Also we marvelled

THE "CREW" OF THE CITTÀ DI MILANO
Cameras of all sizes and makes were busy on both sides as the *Quest* arrived at Kings Bay

at some dark-skinned fellows dressed in green and wearing on the backs of their heads hats decorated with feathers. These were the Alpine chasseurs who had been brought from Italy because they were supposed to be better suited to the work than sailors accustomed only to the mild winds of the Mediterranean.

The chief immediately went on board the *Città di Milano* to confer with Commander Romagna. The rest of us set out for land in one of the life-boats of the *Quest* in order to take a look at the community, New Aalesund.

It is the coal deposits up here that have created this civilization. Alongside the narrow-gauge railway up toward the mine stood a number of low, red-painted wooden houses. One of the first of these attracted our special attention. On a little sign scarcely visible over the door we read the modestly printed word "Store." The building was not open now, but it corresponded to the great department store in Stockholm inasmuch as one might obtain for cash up here

THE "DEPARTMENT STORE" OF NEW AALESUND
Here all arctic wants are supplied

all that one needed for daily existence. And just beside it in an unpretentious little building was housed the post office as indicated by a yellow post horn, faded from weather and wind, over the door.

Along the walls of the house the snow drifts still lay high up toward the roof. The spaces between the different houses were wholly ice-free, though far from dry or clean. And to make one's way through this without heavy shoes or rubber boots, was not advisable.

The population up there, if one can call the few permanent residents by that name, consisted almost without exception of officials and workers at the mines. They were very courteous in spite of our foolish questions about how it was possible to live up here in these bleak regions. In return they put questions like this to us: "And are you going up to fetch Nobile?" And I answered them, as I had answered so many times before, that this was indeed what I intended to do. And it would be so much easier for me, since even before my departure from Sweden I had seen Nobile in my dream

MAJOR MADDALENA LANDS HIS SAVOIA AT KINGS BAY

and actually removed him from his enforced sojourn on the ice blocks.

"Then—good luck! But can you tell me what business those Italians really had up here? You ought to have seen Nobile when he was trying to learn to run on skis! Four or five men had to stand around to help him to his feet when he fell and that was by no means seldom."

Our shore leave was soon ended and we returned to the harbour.

Then all at once came the whir of motors. Was it possibly a motor from the mines? Or was it possibly the *Uppland?*

Now the source of the sound became more distinct, constantly drawing nearer and nearer. And sure enough—high up to the south we saw a seaplane. The motors soon were cut down to half, and the plane began its descent. And although we really did not want to believe it, we were soon aware that it was not our *Uppland* but a Savoia plane—that is, the one in which Major Maddalena had flown the whole way up from Italy. After a few turns over the bay, the Savoia landed some hundred yards out in the harbour.

It looked very wonderful, that plane, as it came driving through the water framed by high fjelds, massive blue-green glaciers, and a sea filled with pack ice.

Now activity and excitement began on board the *Città di Milano.* In a number of motor and row boats the crew, officers, journalists, and motion-picture men hurried out to bid Maddalena welcome. And well he deserved it! All honour to one who makes a flight like that! The hurrahs and cries of joy soon were drowned by the blasts from the sirens of the *Città di Milano.*

At the sight of all this we ourselves did not feel so greatly encouraged. That I must admit. We felt as if our own expedition, though fitted out in tiptop shape, at least according to Swedish ideas, could accomplish nothing in rivalry with this giant. For surely this very night—the weather after all was exceedingly fine—Maddalena would set out on his way toward the Nobile group.

"You will see," I said to my comrades, "that early tomorrow morning Nobile will be eating breakfast on board the *Città di Milano.*"

But the sounds from the *Quest,* childish in comparison with those of the *Città di Milano,* roused us from our gloomy reflections. And so we were rowed to the *Quest* again.

Captain Tornberg's conference with Commander Romagna had been productive to this extent, that he secured a general orientation of the position of the various rescue expeditions from the Italian chief.

As soon as we were all again on board, the *Quest* weighed anchor and at 9:30 in the evening set out with Virgo Harbour on Amsterdam Island as its nearest goal. The *Tanja* was ordered by radio to force its way to the same harbour. According to calculations, both ships could reach Virgo Harbour at the earliest at 7 the following morning.

As soon as the *Quest* had got under way and the conventional greetings had been exchanged with the *Città di Milano,* we all assembled with the Chief down in the gun room to get the latest news. Romagna had informed us that General Nobile and his five

CAPTAIN LUNDBORG WALKS THE TRACKS AT KINGS BAY

To the left the hangar; to the right the coal mines. The railroad connects the mines with the port

associates were to be found on the ice six miles northeast of Foyn Island, which island, however, was incorrectly placed on the nautical chart. This latter fact we could determine because the astronomical position of the group and the bearings that were taken from there toward Foyn Island and the land did not agree, when all these readings were entered on the chart. Since it was impossible to determine precisely just where the group was, this only further increased the difficulties in relieving it.

On the 17th Captain Riiser-Larsen with his seaplane had been at the supposed position of the Nobile group, but had found nothing. This further emphasized the great difficulties in finding the camp as well as the unreliability of the chart.

On the same day Lieutenant Lützow-Holm had been at Charles XII Land, but he, too, had seen nothing. The night before the 18th he had pitched camp on the ice at Brandy Bay. His night camp consisted of a sleeping bag that he had brought along, and when a touch on the bag woke him in the morning, he opened it in the hope that it might be some of the *Italia's* men; but to his surprise he found instead that a polar bear had come for a morning call!

Regarding the conditions among the Nobile group, news had reached the Romagna that no weapons were at hand and as polar bears were plentiful, rifles were particularly desirable. Also there was great need of radio batteries, shoes, food, medicines, and cigarettes.

On the 30th of May, Malmgren had left the camp in company with the corvette captains, Zappi and Mariano, first to cross Foyn Island to Cape Brun and later to pass Cape Platen to the Spitzbergen North Cape and in this way seek to get help for the group. Out on the ice, however, all were very anxious about him and his companions.

The remainder of the crew of the *Italia*, seven men, who had been carried off with the airship itself after the first catastrophe, had landed 20 or 25 miles to the east according to Nobile's belief.

THE QUEST AT ANCHOR IN VIRGO HARBOUR
The prow is reinforced with steel. Otherwise the ship is of wood with an outer coating of stout oak planks

That group, however, was considered lost, although the bulk of the provisions had been in the body of the dirigible.

On the 13th of June a sledge expedition with two Norwegian dog drivers had departed from Wahlenberg Bay on North East Land to make its way farther east past Ripps Bay.

Another sledge expedition, consisting of two Norwegian leaders, two Italian Alpine chasseurs, and nine dogs with sledges had set out from Beverley Sound to the east on June 16th. The sledge tracks of this expedition had been clearly seen by Riiser-Larsen during his flights.

Just a few days before a Russian ice-breaker, *Malygin*, with an airplane on board, was reported at Hoffnung, or Walrus Island, seeking to make its way along the eastern coast of North East Land up toward the Nobile camp.

Furthermore, the Italian government had engaged a smaller

Finnish Junker plane with both skis and wheels as well as pontoons and this machine was expected every hour.

All this information naturally was the subject of a lively discussion among us in the gun room of the *Quest*. Pro and con, we weighed matters and again we had the feeling that our small planes would fall short in comparison with what was at hand and what would arrive for the rescue.

The night was very lovely. A light wind rippled the sea, and the midnight sun was warm and beautiful. We all stood long on deck looking at the glorious Spitzbergen scenery.

At 5 o'clock the next morning, the 19th of June, we anchored south of Amsterdam Island in the so-called Virgo or André Harbour. Although we had arrived at our first base we remained in bed, since we really could do nothing until the *Tanja* arrived with our airplanes on board. And the silence of the *Tanja* alarmed us somewhat, since we well knew that the vessel was not built for passage through such ice as is found in this region. But we also knew that the experienced old Norwegian ice pilot, Captain Ness, was on board the *Tanja* and we felt sure that he would manage somehow.

At 6 we all rushed up on deck without taking time to put on more clothes than the night garments we were wearing. For we had heard the sound of a motor to the south. It might possibly be the *Uppland*, but more likely it was Maddalena starting on the first expedition toward the Nobile group. The latter supposition soon proved to be correct. Many of us certainly wished ourselves on board the Savoia plane, which like a steel-grey bird was now flying high over our heads.

After breakfast we all went ashore in order to study André Harbour a little more closely. We were on historical ground. For it was from this point that our compatriot S. A. André, in 1897, made his attempt to reach the North Pole in a drifting balloon. We saw the remains of the little "balloon city" sticking up through the snow. Underneath we discovered the foundation for the balloon house, the remains of the gas machinery and all that belonged to it, tin cans,

VIRGO HARBOUR

Taken from a hill on Dane Island. The white ship is the *Quest*, the dark one a visiting whaler. The sharp point at the left is "New Malmslätt"

and a mass of other metal rubbish. It seemed so strange to think of the relatively primitive implements which were available only such a short time ago for the dangerous journey toward the Pole. And now a few of us Swedes were again here, not exactly prepared to fly to the North Pole, but ready to test our wings for flight over the very regions that our countryman André once covered.

Since Virgo Harbour is used by whalers for wintering and has been used in this way for many years, the André site, instead of being a little balloon town as formerly, has now become a little cemetery. For among the many who have tried their luck here, not a few have succumbed to cold and scurvy. In all their simplicity the six graves with their plain wooden crosses were a touching scene and, besides, reminded us all that we must be cautious.

Later on some whalers told us that scurvy begins with a desire to do nothing but sleep or at least to lie down. When there are no medicaments at hand—that is, in this case, fresh food and vegetables —attempts are made to arrest the disease by forcing the sufferers, with whips or switches, to keep moving. In this way the final outcome of the disease, death, may be postponed, at least for a time.

After the return to the *Quest*, my Malmslätt mechanic, Weibahr, and I set out in one of the large, heavy life-boats on an expedition toward Danish Island, the eastern part of which consists of an extended lowland which we thought would be excellent as an air base. We took skis and rifles with us, and with the heavy wind and current in our favour, we soon rowed the mile and a quarter. Then I strapped on my skis and under magnificent snow conditions and a warm summer sun I explored the region. Since there was not the slightest doubt but that the place was suitable, I returned to Weibahr and the boat and was able to report that the field was at least five times as large as the one at Malmslätt. Just as we were about to set out again for the *Quest*, we saw the *Tanja* steam into the harbour, and we increased our speed still more. But to make more than a mile in this direction against wind and current was by no means a task for sluggards. If we rested on our oars at all, the wind and current wiped out the hard work of many minutes.

ANDRÉE'S BALLOON CITY

Members of the Nobile Rescue Expedition examine the remnants of the Swedish balloonist's attempt to reach the Pole in 1897

A GAS TANK LEFT BY ANDRE IN 1897

At 12:30 the *Tanja* anchored a little way from the *Quest*. After the reports of the respective journeys of the two ships had been briefly given, the mounting of the seaplanes began immediately. All lent a hand, for it was a case of getting our things together as quickly as possible. To be sure, we had access to the cranes of the ship and could remain on board until the seaplanes were mounted, but, as the hold was filled with fragile parts, the mere unloading of wings, pontoons, and the like took considerable time. The body of No. 255 had stood on the deck all the way from Gothenburg. We began with this boat, and as early as 7 o'clock, Jacobsson and his scout, Rosensvärd, were ready for the first trial flight. With resounding hurrahs from us all, No. 255 started. It was the first Swedish plane that had ever been in the air above Spitzbergen.

Now we began on No. 257. The body and all the parts for this plane were in the hold, consequently the mounting took a much longer time, but by noon the following day No. 257 also arose, with Svensson as pilot.

Late in the evening of the 19th came a report from Lieutenant

NO. 255 READY TO FLY

The first of the Swedish Hansa planes mounted, with Lieutenant Jacobsson leaning forward to climb on board

THE UPPLAND ARRIVES AT VIRGO HARBOUR
The three-motored Swedish passenger plane with the *Tanja* behind it

Karlsson that the *Uppland* had started from Tromsö at 6 P. M. At almost any time during the night of the 20th we might expect to see the latest valuable addition to our collection of planes land beside the *Quest*. And sure enough we had barely gone to bed when we again heard the whir of motors, and after a short orientation swing Sergeant Nilsson landed in Virgo Bay. Some minutes later the *Uppland* lay moored beside the *Quest*.

But where was the crew of the *Uppland* to be put? We were already crowded on board, and all the sleeping bunks were taken. It was not possible for two men to share the narrow berths on the *Tanja* and the *Quest*. Lieutenant Karlsson had to occupy the sofa in the gun room of the *Quest*, and Sergeant Nilsson found a place in the deck house forward.

The brilliant flight of Sergeant Nilsson in the *Uppland* from Stockholm via Tromsö, with a brief intermediary landing in Kings Bay, to Virgo Harbour is a record performance in the history of Swedish aviation for which the leader deserves the greatest credit.

THE GRAVE OF A DUTCH WHALER ON DANE ISLAND
The *Quest* in the distance

The day after its arrival, the *Uppland* was made ready, together with the two Hansa machines (Hansa is an abbreviation, the full name being Hansa-Brandenburg), and this very evening the chief decided to make the first flight out toward the Nobile group. He therefore ordered Doctor Huss to put up all the supplies that had been taken along in small packets to be thrown from the air to the *Italia* group. The chief had been thoughtful enough to take an abundance of provisions for this purpose from Stockholm, and without any desire to boast, I can say that the Swedish expedition was the best equipped in this respect. We prepared a carbine with ammunition, a collapsible rubber life-boat equipped with a jointed paddle oar, some boxes of pemmican, some powerful "Nife" batteries, two flasks of whisky, 800 Abdulla cigarettes, and medicines of various kinds. In order that the packages should not suffer injury when they struck the ice, they were provided with parachutes which the chief had ordered of a silk firm in Stockholm. They were of red cloth, the largest about three yards in diameter. When the three seaplanes

had started, I received from Captain Tornberg orders to set out with the *Quest* and the *Tanja* to Hinlopen Strait, where the chief had planned to establish a new base for the expedition. Out there possibly, he said, there might come an opportunity to make ready my Fokker plane.

The *Tanja* being much faster than the *Quest*, I selected the former as the flagship on this, my own little sea expedition to the east. To be sure, it was not a warship that I commanded, but it was a unique combination at all events: an engineer turned aviator, temporarily appointed as commander of a Swedish transport ship chartered by the government and of a Norwegian Arctic sloop.

The joy, however, did not last long. On the same latitude opposite Vogelsang the radio operator of the *Tanja* brought me a message on the bridge ordering me to return to Virgo Harbour. During his flight the chief had found that not only Hinlopen Strait, but even the channel to the west, was ice-blocked.

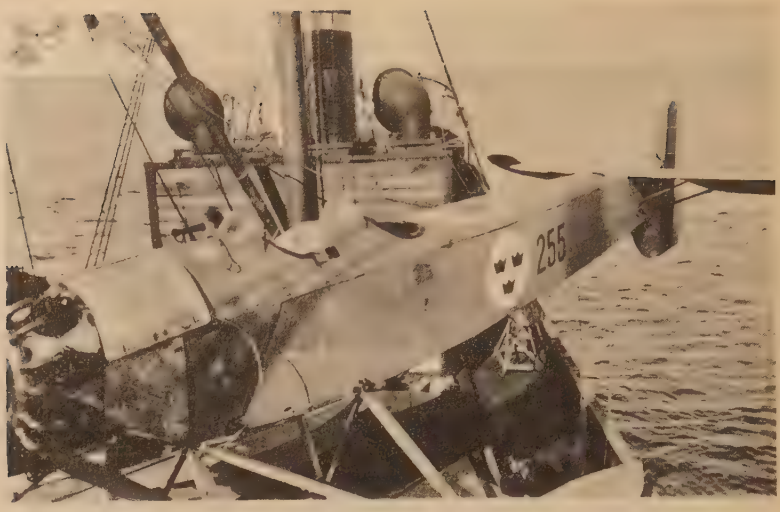
Therefore, since the *Tanja* could not proceed farther to the east, where we had hoped for a swift mounting of the Fokker on a solid ice floe, it was necessary to find another mounting place. I took some men with me in the *Tanja's* flat-bottomed skiff and rowed out over the mirror-like water. The lowland of Amsterdam Island, which in our pride we had earlier rechristened New Malmslätt, was immediately eliminated. There were entirely too many shoals outside those parts of the shore line that were low enough for a successful landing of the Fokker parts. Instead we turned toward the eastern section of Danish Island and there we also found excellent ice between the island itself and a smaller islet some 200 yards beyond. And since this large ice-block followed the movements of the tide, we could plan a landing at either high or low tide. After a successful reconnaissance, as we were on our way back to the *Quest*, we found to our terror that a heavy, nasty fog came rolling in toward the land from the east. We immediately learned from Captain Ness that the Spitzbergen fog, in contrast to fogs in other parts of the globe, comes first with an off-shore wind. So long as this wind blows, the fog continues.

"But the seaplanes!" exclaimed someone. "How will they ever manage to land on the water in this fog?" Scarcely were these words spoken than we heard the planes approaching. They had seen the approaching danger and had come down as soon as possible. The chief himself, as leader of the expedition, had gone on board the *Uppland*, and all three planes had been at the location indicated by Nobile. But during their five-hour flight, they had seen nothing either of Nobile or the Malmgren group.

In a report from the *Città di Milano* the following day we learned that Nobile had observed the three Swedish planes which had been about two miles from the camp. Because of the difficulty of finding the site according to the position indicated, General Nobile and Commander Romagna concluded that the airplanes should be dircted by short-wave radio from the Nobile camp. The signals agreed upon were also given to Captain Tornberg.

This evening there also came the expected order for the mounting of the Fokker machine. For the chief now decided that a plane equipped with skis might be used in the rescue work with advantage.

Schyberg and I rejoiced.



THE HANSA NO. 255 ON THE DECK OF THE TANJA
How the planes were transported to Spitzbergen

CHAPTER IV

Before the Start

AT ten the next morning the work of landing and mounting the Fokker plane was to begin. Besides Karlsson and Weibahr, the Malmslätt mechanics, I also had at my disposal a welder named Nilsson, master mechanic Gull, mate Jensen, and three men from the *Quest*, as well as the first mate on the *Tanja*. The fog still lay as heavy and grey as it had been on the day it came billowing in from the sea. The contours of the land were scarcely visible from either of the ships, although these were not much more than a hundred yards from the nearest shore.

THE MEN WHO SET UP THE FOKKER

Left to right: Welder Nilsson, Mate Jensen, August, a sailor from the *Quest*, and Karlsson

An excellent float was made out of the two large life-boats of the *Tanja,* and on this was loaded with no little trouble the body of the Fokker, the wings, and then the other parts in their proper order. Access to outboard motors being impossible we had to row this float the whole mile and a quarter to the ice ledge which proved the most suitable place for mounting, and since, in addition, the current was against us, this transfer was very hard work. After we had effected the first transport, the *Tanja* was moved as near the ice as we dared, and this helped greatly.

Late in the evening of this day the "Weather God," Sandström, paid us a visit on the ice of Danish Island. We actually became frightened when we saw a boat making its way out of the fog. Think how easy it might have been for the good bureau director to lose his way! But when we mildly reproached him for his indiscretion he answered that he did not consider it any more difficult to make his way through the Spitzbergen fog than through that of Lapland.

The chief and the other officers had been on a hunting expedition, with luck that was attested by the number of geese, eiders and auks that hung outside the kitchen on our arrival at the *Quest.*

On the following day the actual mounting began in earnest. The top wing of the Fokker plane being very heavy and long (it weighs 992 pounds and measures 52 feet), we had to make special arrangements for mounting it. In the provisional crate in which the machine had been transported up to Spitzbergen, we brought the Fokker out to a place at the shore where the snow was very deep. There we dug the snow from under the body so that it finally lay so low that the top wing did not have to be lifted to more than shoulder height in order to be attached. For this purpose some heavy beams had been brought by the *Tanja* from Gothenburg, and out of these we made a secure tripod into which a block was fastened. Into this tripod the nose of the motor was now lifted, so that the very high landing gear could be put in place underneath. And when this, the hardest part of the work, had been done, the remainder of the mounting presented no special difficulties. But the labour carried out

THE METEOROLOGIST OF THE SWEDISH EXPEDITION

Director Sandström, commonly called the "Weather God." In the background the *Uppland*

during these two days by the working force already enumerated is worthy of the highest commendation.

On the afternoon of this day, June 22, both of the Hansas started again, with the chief and Jacobsson as pilots and Christell and Rosensvärd as scouts or navigators, on a new flight out toward the Nobile group. On several of the packets I had written a request to the Nobile group that if there was a level field somewhere in the vicinity of the camp this should be designated by a T-shaped sign made of the red parachutes, the top part of the T windward. The day before, Maddalena had succeeded, with the help of the short-wave radio, in finding the Nobile camp and had even dropped many necessities of various kinds. He also reported seeing a field not far from the camp, and it was with this in mind that I made the above-named request.

Here it is appropriate to say a word about how the *Italia* men were supplied from the time the dirigible met disaster until the first aid came through Major Maddalena. The tent that sheltered the men out there on the ice had lain in the ship itself above the front gondola, and as if by a downright miracle it had fallen out on the ice when the gondola was crushed. The provisions which had been in the gondola at the time of the catastrophe and which had been scattered over a relatively small area on the ice, together with the men, had been brought there as ballast from the dirigible's larger storeroom. That the delicate instruments had not been injured in the sharp crash against the ice must be considered as a piece of unheard-of good fortune in the great disaster.

The men had no real shoes—only Lapp shoes of reindeer skin—and so the heavy footwear thrown down by Maddalena was very welcome. Shoes of reindeer skin are warm and excellent in their way, as long as it is freezing, but during a thaw or wet weather, the water seeps through and then one always goes around with wet feet. In the matter of clothes they were better off, for a dirigible journey in these regions obviously makes heavy demands in this respect. Any real lack of the necessities of life the group on the ice had not felt, but on the other hand one can easily imagine how it

TESTING THE TRIPOD. IT SEEMS STRONG ENOUGH
From left to right: Schyberg, Weibahr, Jensen, and August

would feel to live for a month on nothing but polar bear meat, pemmican, and chocolate.

The storage batteries for the radio had lasted surprisingly well during the past month, but those thrown down by Maddalena came just in time, not to say the very last moment. He had also dropped some collapsible life-boats and some carbines with ammunition. Until then the only weapon at hand out on the ice had been the Colt pistol wherewith Finn Malmgren some days after the catastrophe had laid low the polar bear whose flesh had furnished food for nearly a month.

* * *

Toward evening the Fokker machine was mounted and we began to put in gasolene and oil. With the primitive equipment we had, the filling took a long time. August, the helmsman of the *Quest*, was the mainstay of this work, and he knew the exact proportion of benzol to gasolene to produce the precise mixture that I wanted. Finally, just before midnight, when everything was ready for the test flight, Lieutenant Schyberg and I took our places in the plane. At least ten times during the day I had surveyed different starting points, and it was not without certain excitement that I finally gave the motor full "gun" for the first start down a slight incline of the shore out toward the rather bumpy ice. The start went unexpectedly well, and soon Danish Island lay far below us. We made a little trip over the very nearest region and were delighted with the beautiful view in the dazzling, warm midnight sun. It is a magnificent sight—these polar sea stretches, glaciers, sharp-pointed mountain tops and fjords. To the west the sea lay almost mirror-like and free from ice; to the north and east the ice belts gleamed white along the horizon.

After the motor and the radio had been found to function to full satisfaction, we landed on the lowland of Amsterdam Island, which we had agreed to use as the Fokker base for the present. It was the same stretch of land that we earlier had intended to use for the mounting of the Fokker plane, but which we had had to give up

THE FOKKER PARTLY MOUNTED
Lieutenant Schyberg standing before the machine

SETTING UP THE FOKKER

The engine in the prow is about to be lifted with block and tackle into the tripod, so that the landing gear can be attached underneath

PUTTING THE SKIS UNDER THE FOKKER

THE FOKKER READY FOR ITS FIRST TRIAL FLIGHT

either because of the high banks or the many shallows beyond the shore line itself.

At 2 o'clock in the night after Schyberg and I had left the Fokker in a safe place on Amsterdam Island, we again went on board the *Quest* just as the Hansa machines had landed after their second locating flight to the Nobile group. Already when our row-boat was passing the *Tanja*, someone had called to me that there was a fine landing field near Nobile and that now it was the Fokker's turn to show what it could do. And quite right—when we again were on board the *Quest*, the chief gave us the news about the flight back to the Nobile group. On a sharp turn to the right under a fog bank, he had suddenly discovered the camp on the ice, and had dropped all the packets from the lowest possible height. The fliers had waited long enough to make sure that the men below had found the packets. Once again we were to hear accounts of how impossible the ice was for a contingent forced landing; the outcome, whether a sea or land plane was involved, could only be a complete smash-up.

Finally came my own order for the next day, interesting and promising enough—in spite of the strenuous work of the past two days—to keep an experienced flier awake the remainder of the night. The order read: "Tomorrow you are to land at the Nobile camp." At that moment Schyberg and I were truly delighted.

To be sure there was another task to be undertaken as soon as possible—a matter that lay very near to the heart of the chief, namely, the search for Malmgren and Amundsen. Nothing had been heard from the latter for several days, and, to make matters worse, no one knew which course he had taken from Tromsö to Spitzbergen. Just before the chief started on the second flight he had told me of his intention to use the Fokker plane in scouting for Amundsen, but now that the weather was so fine and since there was a small stretch where a landing apparently could be made, we ought to strike while the iron was hot.

During Midsummer Eve, Sergeant Nilsson made a six-hour flight with the *Uppland* to look for Amundsen and his lost Latham

plane along the most southerly shores of Spitzbergen. On this flight, in addition to the ordinary scout, Lieutenant Karlsson, and some mechanics, went also the commander of the *Quest*, Captain Schjelderup. His amusement was childlike, even in anticipation, at this, the first flight of his life. But as he had previously been all around the Spitzbergen coast in the *Quest*, as well as in other Polar Sea ships, it was not merely to gratify the wishes of someone desirous of flying that the chief permitted Schjelderup to go along.

My mechanics had received orders to row over to Amsterdam Island and fill the Fokker plane to the brim and in spite of the arduous work of the last two days they agreed to do this that very night. But they soon came back and reported that it was totally impossible to land so much as one single gasolene can on Amsterdam Island where the Fokker plane stood. Either the shores were several yards high and precipitous, or else at points where they were lower, the water was so shallow that it was impossible to reach them in a loaded boat or float. Nothing remained, therefore, but to fly the plane over again to the ice shore on Danish Island. Things went almost completely wrong for me in the afternoon of Midsummer Day, when I was to make this flight. In less than twenty-four hours the great amount of snow on New Malmslätt had melted so much that when I was about to drive the plane out to a suitable starting place, it sank down several times into the snow. Now and then, when the skis of only one side sank deep into the loose snow and the Fokker therefore stood at "three quarters," I feared that the whole undertaking would end in complete disaster. Thanks to a remarkable piece of work by Weibahr and Nilsson who helped with the wing, I managed after about two hours' time to get my plane up on a slight elevation, where there was snow, to be sure, but from which all the melted water had flowed away. The strong wind and the fact that I was alone in the plane explain why I managed to rise in an unbelievably short starting run and so avoided a somersault in the slush.

Even out on Danish Island the chances for landing were worse than before. But the strong wind helped me to come down in a

INSTALLING THE RADIO IN THE FOKKER
Lieutenant Schyberg seated to the right

THE FOKKER ABOUT TO LAND AT NEW MALMSLÄTT
Taken at midnight the day before Midsummer Eve

relatively small area. Immediately the filling of the tanks began. This was by no means a trivial matter: more than 200 gallons of gasoline and 12 gallons of oil. Furthermore, the radio, which had been mounted the day before, was now to be taken out to make the plane lighter for the expected start from Nobile's fiying field.

In the afternoon we all assembled with the chief in the gun room to be caught up and to get orders for the prospective flight.

The plan was as follows:

Both the Hansa planes and the Fokker were to start at 8 in the evening and proceed to Hinlopen Strait where Jacobsson and his scout Rosensvärd were to remain to reconnoitre for a new base, suitable for both sea and land planes. But, without an intermediary landing, the chief and I were to proceed to the Nobile camp, where I was to try to come down. After I had picked up one of the stranded I was to return immediately to Hinlopen Strait where I was to leave my passenger at the place designated by Jacobsson, immediately return to the Nobile camp to take the next man, and so on. On my first flight, Schyberg was to accompany me as scout, but on the second and those following I was to be alone so as to be able to take two men from the ice with me each time.

WHALE SNAPPED FROM THE QUEST
Another whale has just dived to the right

CHAPTER V

Rescuing Nobile

SOON after midnight on Midsummer Eve I taxied my heavily loaded Fokker plane to a slight elevation on the shore to get as good a starting point as possible from its peak. To be sure the former start from this place had succeeded admirably but now the plane was considerably heavier and the wind instead of being at dead calm was slightly with us. But even this time the start went off excellently, and just as the plane lifted, in spite of the whir of the motor, I heard a great cry of joy from Schyberg in the scouting seat behind me. For he knew as well as I that with the usual

manipulations I could do no more for a successful start from this place than any other pilot and that therefore I must have had a great deal of real luck to succeed.

After we had mounted some hundred yards in the air, we observed that both the Hansas had started from the Virgo inlet, and some minutes later all three planes were on their way toward the east.

It is not easy to describe my impressions of this first long flight over these regions, desolate and magnificent, though from the point of view of landing, anything but friendly. For the western part of Spitzbergen ("Pointed Mountains"), certainly deserves its name. And out at sea lay the drift ice; close to the shores ice-covered areas, and along almost the entire coast line were glaciers with their steep, cracked, blue-green terminals.

While the chief and Jacobsson took their course from Flat Hook direct to Verlegen Hook, I followed instead the vicinity of the coastline, which offered greater landing possibilities than the straight course, consisting partly of open water. The farther east we came toward Hinlopen Strait, the more firmly the ice was packed, and since it then made no difference whether one flew over land or ice or whether one had a sea or land plane, I rejoined the patrol.

After Jacobsson, with a sharp turn to the left, had left us over the northern part of Hinlopen Strait, the chief and I, as agreed, continued farther toward the east. And now the North East Land lay before us like a giant ice plateau, evenly rounded toward the top, with a circle of high peaks to the north and, in between, deep bays covered with solid ice.

I nearly forgot my night's errand owing to the wildness and magnificence of the landscape. The clock was near 11 P.M., but yet the sun was high in the heavens. The many seals hastily disappeared into their holes, as now and then I dove down toward the ice to find out the possibilities of landing. Tracks of polar bears, large round marks—visible a mile away—ran from seal hole to seal hole. The polar bruins must certainly gorge themselves on

seal in these parts. Out toward Cape Wrede and Cape Platen the tracks of the Norwegian dog sledge expedition stretched in long straight lines over the ice. The great wilderness consequently was not so completely lacking in signs of life as one might have expected.

Then we left the coast itself and turned toward Broch and Foyn Islands. Ice, ice as far as the eye could see. Not a smooth icy surface on which one could travel by sledge or automobile. It was more like a frozen desert broken up by a gigantic stone crusher. Here and there one could see a little channel or an island in the ice, insufficient, however, for landing. And although Foyn and Broch were islands, they now looked far from inviting. They were more like two large stone heaps sticking up out of the frozen surface.

But now the pack ice, extending for miles, lay before us—bleak and majestic. What would all human inventive power avail if the ice really set out to clutch us?

After about twenty miles of flying over the consistently monotonous, horribly jagged surface of the pack ice, the chief, in the Hansa, made a turn to the right—and behold below us: like a few tiny dots or dark pinheads I discerned a group of human beings beside a faint streak of smoke.

This was the camp.

One of the men had posted himself a little distance from the others, and was waving a large red cloth above his head, presumably to enable us to see the camp better. When the Hansas had flown out to the group the day before the same man had been observed and he had even been given a name—the man with the flag. As I later learned, he was Professor Behounek.

A moment later we saw a little tent, some multi-coloured flags laid out on the ice, and a mast flying pennants, and then I also spied the red T-shaped mark by which Nobile, at the request inscribed on the packets thrown down the day before by the Swedes, had indicated the most suitable landing place for my Fokker.

This was the place then!

The Hansa, flown by the chief, now made wide circles above

THE HANSA HYDROPLANE NO. 255 RETURNS FROM A FLIGHT OVER THE ICE

THE CREW OF ONE OF THE SWEDISH HYDROPLANES READY FOR ANOTHER FLIGHT

the spot at a great height. And my plan was to try to get down on this ice floe—the most northerly landing place I had tried so far. . . .

But it certainly was advisable to be a bit careful about alighting on this field. For who could tell what the *Italia* men down there might mean by a "good landing place," a term that they had used in their radio reports the previous day. And besides, when I looked a little closer, I found that the red T on the ice, which was to indicate the direction of the wind and at the same time the best direction for landing, was not properly placed. Luckily a little streak of smoke on the lee side of the field showed me how I ought to land, just the reverse of the direction indicated by the T.

I cut down the motor and swung in toward the short side of the field, passing directly over it at half power and eagerly looking around.

Oh well, the surface was not so very bad. I had seen worse.

Still it seemed best to take a try at the snow. . . .

I therefore made a new swing and with very little power let the Fokker glide on its skis some dozen yards over the snow. Then full throttle and up again. On the return I studied the ski tracks from the air and found that a landing could be made at that spot.

I made the same manœuvre at the next try, but this time at another part of the field. Then I made another test to discover how far I would glide after the plane had come squarely down on the ice. I started this, my last test of the field as an ordinary landing, glided about a hundred yards over the snow, the while hearing Lieutenant Schyberg in the scouting seat behind me report several times:

"This will go all right!"

Then I opened the throttle again went round the field once more, and—landed.

The skis clattered against some icy projections at the far end of the field—now we got a tremendous bump from a hard snow ridge, so severe that we thought the machine would be wrecked. But no, there stood my noble Fokker, hardly fifteen yards from the

piled up pack ice on the windward side of the field, without the slightest injury. Fine stuff we had brought with us from Malmslätt!

The chief's Hansa, which had passed in narrowing circles over the field during my manœuvres, now left us and turned west toward Hinlopen Strait. No doubt it had been a tense moment for Captain Tornberg and Christell, too, before they finally saw the Fokker stand uninjured on the ice.

Now Schyberg hopped out and by holding on to one wing helped make the Fokker swing around as abruptly as possible. Then I taxied slowly down to the other short side of the field where two men came rushing toward us.

I also hopped out, but kept the motor going at low speed in order not to be delayed if it should balk at the start. It would indeed have been a fine situation if once down on the ice I had not been able to start again because of a cranky motor. For anyone who handles motors knows how temperamental they can be.

Then I asked Schyberg to watch the engine while I went to find the General.

The two men came toward me. On the *Quest*, to be sure, we had given very little attention to our toilet since we left Norway—shaving, washing, and other luxuries—and it was not to be wondered at that these men had given even less thought to such matters. They were young men, both of them—Viglieri, naval officer and one of the navigators of the *Italia*, and Biagi, naval non-commissioned officer and radio operator on the dirigible. The former was tall and slender with chalk-white teeth which gleamed prominently against the considerably darker face; the latter short and stubby. Beard and moustaches were long and bristling, the clothing consisted of an indescribable mixture of uniform parts, Arctic equipment, and civilian summer garb. Hands and faces were dark, like those of half-breeds.

I was most heartily welcomed by Viglieri, and the language question was solved when, after a little parleying, we found that English was our best common medium. Although Biagi and I could

CAPTAIN LUNDBORG TAKES A SKI RUN

Meanwhile all preparations are being made for the flight to the Nobile camp. The man filling the tank is August

not understand each other, we laughed and joked. I immediately asked for the General and as he was in the tent about 220 yards from the part of the floe where we now stood, we began our march to that place.

Pack ice is no joke, even if, on a night like this when it was dead calm and a little chilly, the new ice between the blocks made the whole fairly solid. Viglieri and Biagi, who had had plenty of time to become expert in walking on the pack ice, showed me the most dangerous places and how they were to be crossed. To make the march easier for me, Biagi gave me an ice pick, with which I could hook on to solid pieces of ice at the dangerous points, and thereby escape falling into the water. I had not taken off my heavy winter flying clothes, hence the march became very onerous. We did not talk much on the way to the tent, but this much Viglieri and I had time to make clear to each other: I found out his position in life and he mine; also that there was great uneasiness in the camp about the Malmgren group.

Then we finally came to the tent, and there, just outside the opening, sat the General. Beside him were Behounek and Cecioni. In spite of his long beard and moustaches and extraordinary dress, I immediately recognized the General from the many photographs I had seen. He was bareheaded. He wore a grey sweater and light grey knickers, on one foot a civilian summer shoe and on the other a stocking and reindeer-skin slipper. The broken leg was wound with a grey bandage. I hurried toward him and he stretched out both hands and drew me to him in a warm embrace. I then explained who I was and that I had come to take them away from their enforced stay on the pack ice. I asked him to be the first to come with me at once. I could not take more than one this time, as I had my scout with me; but I would soon return alone and then I could take two at a time.

The General pointed to Cecioni, a large powerful man with a stately, typically Italian appearance. He sat close at hand trying to make a litter out of the parts of the crushed gondola on which he

NOBILE PREPARES FOR THE RETURN

The tent with Nobile inside is to the left. Standing are Behounek, Biagi, and Viglieri. In front of Biagi, Cecioni is working on the stretcher

was to be helped over the floe, since both bones of his right leg were broken.

"I have decided on another sequence," said the General. "First Cecioni, then Behounek, Trojani, Viglieri, Biagi, and finally myself."

I then asked the General to change the order as far as he himself was concerned and to go with me at once, since I considered his presence on board the *Città di Milano* very desirable for directing the rescue work, especially in case I could not bring them all back the same night. Besides, it would take considerably longer time to bring the heavy Cecioni back the long distance to the plane. Finally, I hardly thought that the Fokker would rise on the relatively small field with both Cecioni and Schyberg on board.

I watched the General discuss this with the others and by their expressions I could understand that they agreed to the revised sequence. Yet Cecioni began to cry, whereupon I felt moved to go to him with some comforting words which he, however, could not understand, since he spoke only his mother tongue. The General finally bade me wait while he went into the tent to get ready. Creeping on all fours he disappeared inside.

Meanwhile I looked around. The tent, about three yards square, was surrounded by a mass of rubbish of all kinds—tin cans, newspapers, furs, boxes, remnants of the gondola, charts, various instruments, bits of piping, flags, and, a little to the side, the skeleton of Malmgren's polar bear. A large water pool with brownish red spots and remains of the entrails, etc., and a large paw indicated exactly where the bear had been killed.

On the tent covering could be seen some streaks of a pale aniline dye. In this way Biagi had tried to increase its visibility. Since my return from Spitzbergen I have many times heard the term, "the red tent," and these streaks were therefore what was meant.

In the snow beside the radio mast I found some bits of fairly stiff, aniline-dyed paper. Similar strips I also observed on the radio mast itself. These were also the work of Biagi. Before Maddalena came, they had had neither flags nor signal pennants, and it was

then that the resourceful Biagi had sewn together nautical charts, with the printed sides inward, and painted both the white surfaces with aniline dye, which apparently had been found in the gondola. They were now used as flags.

This was not the only example of the inventiveness of Biagi. On a fairly large cardboard disk he had fastened some tinfoil from chocolate wrappers and smoothed this out to get as shining a surface as possible. With this "mirror" Biagi had intended to flash sun signals to the aviators and thus attract their attention.

Later I learned that the present site of the tent was not the original one. First it stood where the gondola had been crushed, but after Malmgren killed the polar bear which provided fresh meat for the camp for some time ahead, the "home" was moved to where the food was instead of bringing the food to the home, a distance of about 80 yards. The killing of the polar bear had indeed been a master shot. To be sure the Colt pistol is of very heavy calibre, but shooting big game with pistols is yet somewhat out of the ordinary. And Malmgren had not only felled the bear. He knew, too, how it should be skinned and butchered, and what parts could be used for food.

A little further to one side lay the parts of Bruin that after a month were still edible—a shoulder and parts of a haunch—hanging in the sun on an aluminium pipe from the gondola. Even in the matter of preserving the meat, Malmgren had been the only one who knew what to do. On the other side of the tent stood the radio antennæ made of aluminium tubes from the gondola, joined with thin ropes and stayed with eight lines. At the top waved a little flag with the emblem of the Alpine chasseurs regiment, and to the stays were attached many flags and multi-coloured rags which Maddalena had dropped and which now were used to attract attention to the camp. And close beside the mast stood the sending apparatus, its batteries covered with a French flag. On a large cloth in the snow some biscuits and tobacco were laid out in the sun. They had been dropped by Maddalena but had fallen into the salt water and now were being dried so that they could be used.

Viglieri came toward me with a whisky bottle and a box of Abdulla cigarettes, some of the offerings of yesterday's Swedish planes. It was touching to see how he wanted to share the few luxuries they had out there, but naturally I could not accept anything. For a moment I thought of taking the proffered delicacies by way of showing how sure I was that there was no need to be economical much longer, since now they would all soon be in safety; but I decided to stand by my refusal—for other reasons.

Then Nobile came creeping out from the tent, still without his hat, but with a pair of sun glasses on his forehead. In his hand he held a packet of books, apparently navigation and log books from the *Italia*. He gave them to me and asked me to take them to the plane. The dog Titina, who ever since my arrival at the camp had made successful attempts to win my favour, did not even seem to question whether or not she was to go along. The little mite was actually put on board before the General.

The General's farewell to his comrades was very touching. He embraced and kissed each one on both cheeks and on the mouth and seemed to give an encouraging word to all. But I think that all the tears shed out there were not alone tears of sorrow, but also of joy because the first stage of saving the whole group was now about to begin.

Viglieri and Biagi, who were in the best physical shape of all—Behounek because of his corpulence found considerable difficulty in moving over the pack ice—now helped the General toward the Fokker. I was uneasy about my motor, especially since I now saw Schyberg coming over the pack ice toward us. I therefore went ahead and asked him, if possible, to help carry the General to the plane.

Over the few even stretches that were crossed, the General himself attempted to crawl in order to give his helpers a chance to rest. That they, however, accomplished a heavy piece of work during the three-quarters of an hour that it took to cover the two hundred odd yards over the rough ice, was all too apparent from Schyberg's

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NOBILE LEAVES THE TENT
The General is supported by Viglieri and Behounek

condition. He finally reached the plane dead tired and dripping with perspiration.

I mounted to my seat and we began by swinging the Fokker into the wind as far down on the field as possible in order to get the longest starting stretch. Then I remained in the plane, and while the General with great difficulty was being lifted into the back seat, I ate a piece of the chocolate which I had got in such abundant quantities in Sweden. It tasted twice as good now, and I felt in excellent form for the seconds of nervous tension that were to come—the start from Nobile's flying field. It was exactly midnight of Midsummer Eve.

Everything was ready for the start! The last farewells were exchanged; the General and Schyberg were in their places in the back seat as far forward as possible in order not to make the plane heavy in the rear. Little Titina had already made herself comfortable on some tarpaulins spread out on the bottom of the rear passenger compartment.

And then I started. . . .

On this uneven and rather short stretch would I succeed in rising with two passengers on board?

The Jupiter motor roared familiarly and faster and faster the Fokker began to glide forward on the ice floe covered with deep snow. Nearer and nearer we came to the pack ice barriers, and the tension was extreme. But, of course, about 15 to 20 yards from the ice ridge and sure failure, my beloved Fokker lifted—and once up in the air the 450 H. P. of the Jupiter motor made it rise swiftly higher and higher. I decided on a complete turn and as we rose ever higher over the massed ice pack and the remaining five men, the Fokker swayed westward toward safer and calmer regions. I could not, of course, talk with Schyberg, but now and then I turned around and nodded to him, and the answer was always a joyous nod in return. We were both agreed that this exceeded our fondest hopes.

The General wanted to look around, but since he had no headgear and since neither Schyberg nor I could spare our flying caps,

THE GENERAL SHARES WITH TITINA
A Swedish breakfast at Russian Island

READING THE THERMOMETER AT THE RADIO MAST

we finally got him to crawl down. It was not advisable to sit bareheaded in the low temperature and the strong draught. However, in order that the General might get some protection against the cold, Schyberg wound his fine scarf into a turban for his head.

Nearer and nearer we came to Foyn Island and the coast—already the solid ice lay below us between the many capes. Some miles south of North Cape we passed the mainland itself and behold! down there lay our Hansas moored to an ice barrier in the Russian Fjord and there on Russian Island was a landing mark for me on a snow-covered field. . . .

After a short turn over this field, I landed and taxied the plane back to the part of the field that lay nearest the moored Hansas. The chief, Christell, Jacobsson and Rosensvärd now came plunging through the snow in the direction of the Fokker. Not many words were exchanged, but the handclasps of my comrades were for me a complete proof that all felt as I did.

The first to jump out of the machine was Titina, and she immediately made herself acquainted with the chief and the other men. The General was lifted out of the plane, and on the navigation seat of the Fokker he was carried to the shore, where my comrades had already begun to arrange a camp and where the three-tongued blue-yellow Swedish man-of-war flag waved on a low ridge. The prevailing mood was wonderful—a handful of Swedish soldiers with their tents and other equipment on such a northerly foreign shore. . . .

After the General had been brought down to the camp on Russian Island, our first procedure was to put him into one of our fine sleeping bags and to regale him in the best way possible. There were sandwiches with cheese, chopped beef and fried potatoes, coffee with white bread, and whisky to make him warm—naturally some cigarettes to top all off with.

The first words of the General expressed his great admiration for the selection of the things dropped from our planes to his camp. When I joined the group later, I learned, besides, that as the first

consignments had come dancing through the air and been investigated the General had enthusiastically exclaimed:

"They must be a practical people—these Swedes!"

I repeat these words not through pride in the fact that I was one of the Swedes, but wholly as a tribute to the advanced organization of the Swedish rescue expedition.

Titina was permitted to share the General's meal, but did not so willingly share his sleeping bag, preferring to have one of her own. Out of the masses of Siberian driftwood found on the coasts of North East Land, of which Russian Island has its share, we made an immense bonfire, which produced warmth and gave to the scene a more pleasant and intimate air.

The chief wondered very much how he could send off a report as quickly as possible about the events of the past few hours and also what he ought to say. It was decided that the Hansa plane, which at my own request was to escort me to the ice floe, was to send a message by radio to the *Quest* to be relayed to Sweden. The wording was brief and to the point:

GENERAL SAVED. RESCUE WORK CONTINUES.
Tornberg.

I sat down beside the General and told of the episode with the Nieuport pursuit planes during the journey of the *Italia* toward Stockholm. The General well remembered the escort, for which he now expressed his thanks, and said that he had been very uneasy lest one of the Nieuport machines should ram his noble dirigible. It seemed very strange that fate should so arrange matters that I was the one to bring help to the General up here so near the Pole.

But now there was no longer time for reflection and anecdotes. Five men still remained on the ice, and I had promised them all that I should soon return. They also trusted to my promise, as I knew, and I was obligated to keep it even if it would have been much more pleasant to take a nap, or at least to rest a while.

I went to the General and told him that I was now ready to

TITINA WATCHES HER MASTER EAT

Captain Lundborg holds the dog while Nobile, safely landed at Russian Island, gets a bite to eat, ensconced in a sleeping bag

start out to the camp on the pack ice again. He did not say much. What he did say was only a faint indication of what I could see in his dreamy glance and his little nods. His large, beautiful, tear-drenched eyes were directed to me with an expression of appeal, hope and gratitude. His last words were:

"When I see all of you, my comrades out there on the ice and yourself, assembled here with me again, that moment will be the happiest of my life. They are worthy of your help, those men out there."

It was a touching scene, which deeply moved us Swedes. I wanted to create a lighter mood—not least for the sake of the General himself and therefore I brightened up and answered:

"Soon I shall be here with them all. Until then, farewell, General!"

A SWEDISH HYDROPLANE ESCAPES THE DRIFT ICE

CHAPTER VI

A Fateful Midsummer Day

WITH the chief at the head, our men carried up twelve gallons of gasolene in tin cans to the Fokker. These cans had been brought along by the Hansas, which had to provide my gasolene supply because the *Quest* had left Virgo Harbour and was now on its way to the new base here at Russian Island. Not even the filling was entrusted to me. My companions insisted on taking care of it themselves.

To ensure a safe start from the ice floe with two passengers, I now left behind all my personal effects—rucksack, tent, sleeping bag, etc. The only thing I took along was a Husqvarna rifle with

ammunition, my Browning pistol and 25 cartridges and, lastly, some chocolate that was already stowed in a bag in the plane.

So I said farewell to the chief and my other comrades and started with the Fokker, now very light for, as planned, this time I flew alone. I arose almost immediately and, after carrying the plane at a low elevation just above the heads of my associates and receiving from them an agreed signal that the mounting of the skis was right, their under surfaces without flaws, I steered toward the east. Jacobsson and Rosensvärd now lifted their Hansas out over Hinlopen Strait. For I had asked permission of the chief not to fly alone out to the ice floe, but to have an escort of one of the Hansas, and this request he had immediately granted.

The flight toward Foyn Island went forward with playful ease in the beautiful weather. Sometimes I was very near the Hansas and sometimes I dropped down to look at the seals and the tracks of polar bears, meanwhile secretly cherishing the hope of catching a glimpse of Malmgren and his two companions.

It was the Hansa that was responsible for the piloting. No matter how much I might have felt at home in that art, I could hardly have made my way alone to the camp. The errors in the nautical chart and the difficulties in finding the Nobile camp only through the indicated position may give a hint of the real problem of making one's way out here. For this reason we followed a definite compass route, as we kept to a straight line from Foyn Island to a visible point on the mainland. And it was very apparent that this was not the first time Rosensvärd and Jacobsson had watched the compass and the nautical chart.

When I found myself between Broch and Foyn Islands, my motor began to sputter. My heart actually stopped beating. What was I to do now?

I shut down the motor and tested the two gasolene tanks one by one. From the very beginning it was clear that I was having gasolene trouble. But no—this did not help. The motor coughed and sputtered just as much, no matter which tank I used.

On half power the Fokker now glided slowly downward. At

this speed it went fairly well but as soon as I tried full speed again, the same dismal music began. In my own mind I deliberated whether I ought to land on a little ice floe that I saw—considerably smaller, certainly, than Nobile's field, but a field none the less—or if I should "land in a heap" on Foyn Island. Among us fliers the latter means coming down with the plane in such a way that it is certain to be ruined, but that nevertheless stops you just on a desired spot. With a little skill the latter procedure does not involve any great risk for the pilot, and since Foyn, after all, was *terra firma*, I decided on this course. After a landing on the island I could easily get provisions and camp equipment from the Hansas and could there peacefully await suitable weather, that is, a larger open lane on which to be picked up by some seaplane. But just when only some two hundred yards remained, the motor again began to function normally. Many a time during my downward course I had tested the motor with the throttle wide open. There had only been a little water in the gasolene, I decided—unfortunate enough out here, so far from the mainland and entirely safe landing possibilities. But now all was well again.

Jacobsson's Hansa, which had disappeared, now came back. He and Rosensvärd must have become uneasy about me.

After circling a few times over Foyn Island for the sake of safety without having the motor trouble recur, I steered with full horsepower out toward the ice floe with Jacobsson's Hansa on my right.

The remaining eighteen miles out to the camp were soon left behind. Already I saw the tent and the smoke and planned to begin a first re-orientation by flying low over the ice floe—for the wind had turned since my earlier visit—and then the motor began to sputter again. Some very forceful words escaped me. Now I had to pull myself together.

At any cost I must get down, and the ice floe on which I had landed safely before was now my only chance. During my downward glide I did everything to get my motor to work smoothly again—but without avail. By a gentle wing glide I approached the

short side of the field. I was forced to land in a side wind in order to use the whole length of the field. A landing across its width was not to be thought of, since it was much too short. Nearer and nearer the ground I dropped, and with the high ice barrier only a few yards behind me, the Fokker touched ground and began to slide over the snow.

But this time I had hit on a poorer landing line. First the plane jumped or hopped over the icy knobs; then the skis dug themselves down in the snow, thawed and slushy from the strong sunshine. It was 4:30 in the morning.

If only my motor had been in perfect condition, I might have given it gas again and then gone up and tried once more. But now, when I was down on the ice, I did not dare to test the motor again, for who could know how much power it would give me? Perhaps only so much that, without rising, the plane would rush in toward the pack ice at the opposite shore side of the field with a terrific crash and there be crushed against the hard hunks of ice.

So I must let it go. . . .

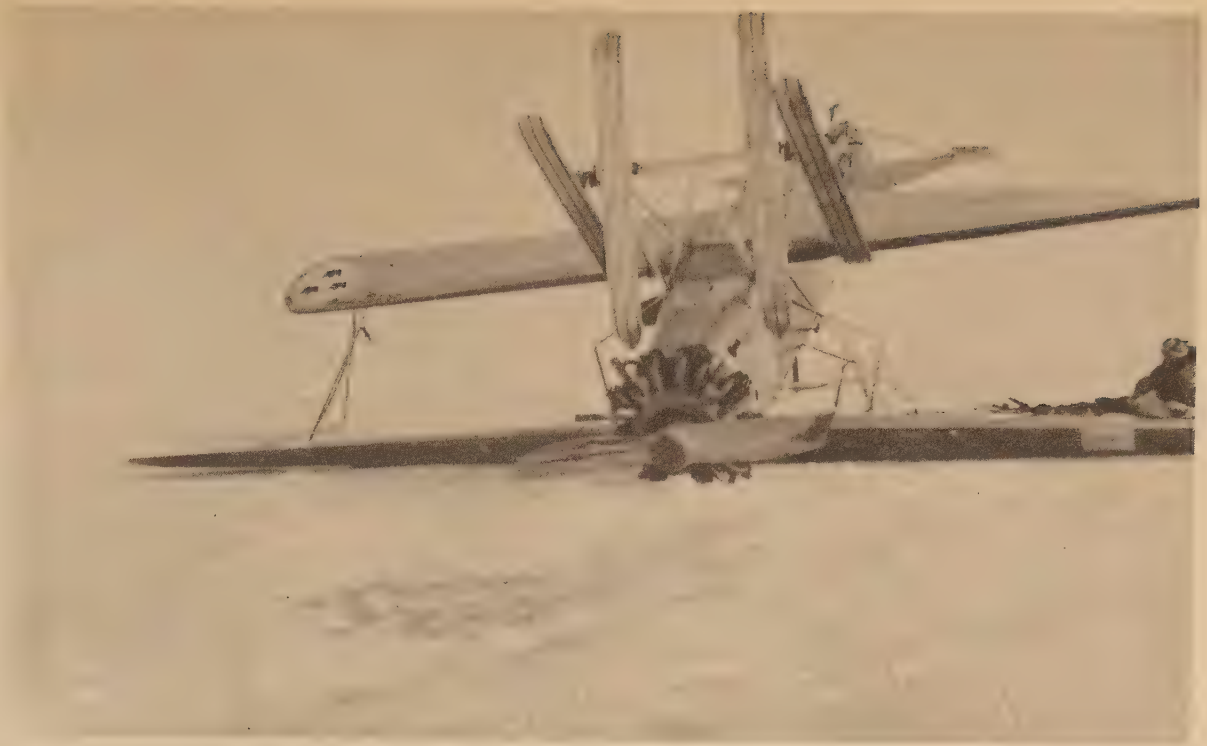
Soon, after all, the Fokker would have to stop. Even the first time it had shown that it could stand some fairly hard knocks, and above all the field had proved itself quite sufficient. And this landing was no poorer than the former one.

I did not have time to finish the thought before I felt the skis, especially the right pair, dig unbelievably far down, the tail grow light, and the nose begin to sink. . . .

Before I knew what it was all about, I found myself hanging by the straps, head down, in my overturned Fokker. At once came the recollection of what I had said at the farewell dinner with my wife in Stockholm:

"Drain well your glass,
For death awaits you!"

Did this mean that I was to be left here, that the net result of my flight out to the ice was only to be an exchange of myself for



THE FOKKER UPSIDE DOWN OF THE ICE FLOE

Picture taken Midsummer Day, June 24th, after Lundborg's unlucky return to the floe. To the right sits the injured Cecioni, who had hoped to be the next passenger

Nobile? Why, yes—it was Midsummer Day, the *twenty-fourth!*

I loosened the straps and slid down in the snow. My nose bled profusely from a blow against the front part of the pilot seat, but with the help of a little snow all was soon well again. Otherwise, I was, as is usual in such somersaults, completely uninjured.

How did I feel?

I think that I was more angry, actually very angry, than desperate. . . .

And there I now stood in the midst of the pack ice! To be sure, one of the best airplanes in the world was beside me, but it was broken and upside down. Viglieri came toward me, embraced me and kissed me on both cheeks, with not a word to bemoan my fate. He cried not only because the hopes of his own speedy rescue had been dimmed through my misfortune, but also because of my own hard fate. Behounek also appeared, caught me with both hands and asked if I was injured.

I saw Jacobsson's Hansa flying in constantly smaller circles around the floe. I went a short distance from the plane to make myself more visible, waved both arms above my head to show that I was uninjured, received the "understood" signal from Rosensvärd, and then the Hansa went its way toward the west. The strong sound of the motor became fainter and fainter, and after some minutes the Hansa was out of sight.

Yes, there stood Cecioni, leaning on an alpenstock, now ready to go with me. For in my absence the survivors, except Trojani who lay in a fever in the tent, had succeeded with stupendous efforts in carrying Cecioni from the camp to the field. My return had taken a little longer than I had promised, but I learned that the one who had been the most convinced of all that I was coming back was Viglieri. And he had been right, but certainly he had never imagined that things would go as they had.

Although Biagi was unable to say anything that I could understand, he mumbled with tears in his eyes a lot of words that I interpreted as a deep lament because of my misfortune.

If I had been angry at first, now my state of mind changed—I

felt not a little desperate. And no doubt I showed signs of it, too.

After I had examined my plane a little closer and found that such vital parts as the wing struts, welded to the body, were broken and bent, and that a repair here on the ice was out of the question, I set out in company with Viglieri, Biagi, and Behounek on my heavy journey toward the tent. Several times Viglieri asked me if there was anything they could do for me, if we should not attempt to turn the plane again, if we should not try to order spare parts and tools by radio—but I only shook my head.

Before we left the Fokker we discussed among ourselves what the next step should be. My suggestion was that we should immediately begin to move the camp to the field, and, Viglieri agreeing, we decided to leave Cecioni where he was, since it would take much too long to carry him to the tent and back again. He could have a sleeping bag to lie in, and as it was very warm this might even be more pleasant than staying in the tent.

On arriving at the camp I immediately went into the tent to sleep off the first spell of deep despair and discouragement. In my heart, however, I had great faith in my comrades—I knew that they would try to get me even if there was only one chance in a hundred.

At 11 o'clock on the morning of Midsummer Day, as I awoke in the stiflingly hot tent, I had to convince myself several times that this was actuality and not an ugly dream. Beside me in the tent lay Trojani, ill with fever. All the others were, quite naturally, outside, the warmth in the tent being really oppressive. Outside, the sun was still shining, and all was calm.

I looked around in the tent. I lay on a reindeer-skin sleeping-bag, which, as I discovered, had been brought along on the *Italia* and had been used until now by the General. In one corner of the tent, beside the entrance, stood the radio equipment with batteries and spare parts for the sending as well as the receiving apparatus. As if by some marvellous fate, both these apparatus had happened to fall on the ice uninjured at the time of the catastrophe. The radio station had been installed by the skilful Biagi. Later I learned that he had not been aware of having fallen on the ice or that the

dirigible was gone, until he had begun to hunt for the radio equipment. And, as all know, it was only a couple of days until the first S. O. S. signals from Biagi's short-wave radio were picked up by a listener in Russia. Not before the 8th of June, on the other hand, was a connexion established with the *Città di Milano* in Kings Bay. All rumours that the vessel had previously made contacts with the Nobile group, but that for certain reasons the contacts had been kept secret, are untrue and were spread only for the purpose of irritating the command of the *Città di Milano.*

In another corner stood a large wooden box containing the most delicate of the provisions of the camp: chocolate, sugar, marmalade, etc. Otherwise the floor of the tent was covered by an incredibly variegated, dirty, and damp mixture of bits of reindeer skin, the still raw hide of the polar bear felled by Malmgren, old flying suits, cast-off underclothes, etc. It was difficult to find signs of any fixed places for the six men, nor were there any such. The light blue satin of the inner tent covering gave the effect of incredible luxury in these surroundings, but the same cannot be said for the stockings, mittens, and shoes hung up to dry on the tent pole. Highest up on this pole, quite at the top, and turned toward the entrance, hung a picture of the patron saint of Italian aviation. I learned afterwards that this picture had also been on the expedition of Amundsen and Nobile with the *Norge.*

I crept out of the tent. Behounek had lain down outside in a sleeping-bag, partly because of lack of room under the canvas, and partly because of the warmth. He slept and snored lustily. Viglieri and Biagi stood smoking at the radio mast—they turned immediately toward me and again expressed their unbounded despair at what I had encountered because of them. But as if to express a word of hope, Viglieri assured us that now that Nobile was safe he would use every available means to bring all of us and myself first of all to safety. For he gave me to understand from the start that I would be the very first to be taken on the plane that eventually might land for us. In a way Behounek was therefore right when subsequently—in none too pleasant a spirit, to be sure—he

VIGLIERI AND LUNDBORG AT THE OLD CAMP, MIDSUMMER DAY, 1928

declared through the press that I was chosen as the first to leave the camp because of my difficulty in adjusting myself to my fate. But to this matter I shall return later.

The first matters to interest me now were the location of land and whether or not a Swedish plane had been sighted. Foyn and Broch rose above the horizon out of the craggy surface of the pack ice. On this and the following days I looked with longing at these rocky cliff islets. How differently had I viewed them before! And no planes had been sighted.

Close beside the radio mast, on a large and very high ice block, were to be found the nautical instruments of the camp—compass, sextant, field-glasses, charts, etc.—all in miraculously good condition in spite of the catastrophe. In the midst of these instruments stood a wooden image of the patron saint already referred to and a handsomely framed photograph of the Queen of Italy with her signature and a dedication to the *Italia* written in her own hand.

I took the heavy field-glasses and lifted them to my eyes. The bare cliffs of Foyn and Broch seemed very near. They tempted and pulled in a way that is hard to describe. But how to reach them?

Snowdrifts, bare mountain clefts, wild precipices, and other details were clearly visible. I knew, of course, how far away it was, but it was characteristic of my state of mind that I asked Viglieri about the distance.

He answered: "Eighteen miles."

I could even see Charles XII Island sticking up like a dark knob above the ice. To the south was seen a level whitish-yellow elevation over the notched surface of the pack ice—the glaciers of Great Island. Otherwise, in whatever direction I turned my glance, there was only massed ice. Here and there larger icebergs projected.

There was still complete calm. The temperature in the sun stood at about 60° Fahrenheit and the water from the piled up snow and ice dripped down into the small pools. This was the music of the pack ice for the day. Otherwise there was a deathlike silence.

I asked Viglieri if I might send General Nobile a telegram. Naturally I was permitted to do this. The camp had the new

batteries dropped by the fliers, and more were obtainable, so at least we did not need to economize with the current. I wrote the telegram, as given below, in English, and as soon as the prearranged time had come for radio connexion with the *Città di Milano*, Biagi sent it.

The message read:

To General Nobile:

AT MY SECOND LANDING ON THE ICE FLOE MY PLANE TURNED OVER AND WAS INJURED TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT REPARATION OUT HERE IS OUT OF THE QUESTION. I MYSELF AM UNINJURED. IN THE NIGHT WHEN IT IS SOMEWHAT COLDER A PLANE EQUIPPED WITH SKIS CAN EASILY LAND HERE. I SHALL TRY TO MAKE THE BEST OF OUR LANDING FIELD. BE KIND ENOUGH TO INFORM MY WIFE IN SWEDEN THAT I AM ALL RIGHT.

GREETINGS FROM US ALL,

Lundborg.

Immediately after this telegram was sent we ourselves got a dispatch from the General in which he encouraged us in every way. He told us that two or three more light airplanes with skis had been ordered in England and would soon be on their way, that the Russian ice-breaker *Krassin* was steaming toward the north at great speed from the Baltic Sea, and also that the Russian ice-breaker *Malygin* was on its way to the north, that new sledge expeditions had set out to the east and, finally, that we should all be quite calm and serene. The telegram, which ended with a special greeting to me, was signed, "Your Nobile."

Deeply moved, with tear-filled eyes, we read the telegram over and over again. How wonderful it felt to know that practically the whole world was hurrying to our aid and that no means were being spared to bring us help! We talked about how extraordinary it really was that we, a few stranded men up here, far from the rest of the world, were so favoured with help, in contrast with many others who were shipwrecked or otherwise in need.

"We have provisions for two months," said Viglieri.

He took out his large diary and showed me the different columns where down to the very gramme he had indicated the remaining supplies of various kinds. This diary contained daily entries by Viglieri, and during the past few days the camp household account showed not so few items of provisions in the column marked "Receipts."

"Yes! Think of the many people on land who don't even have enough food for the day," I remarked.

To this they all agreed.

So we patted each other on the back and tried to swallow our tears. But somehow it was not easy. It was Midsummer Day. I thought of my wife. Together with her parents we had planned a long motor trip for this very day. Perhaps at this moment, ignorant of my fate, they were in the motor and on their way. If only the news about the Midsummer I was having would not reach them too soon. . . .

But although our thoughts turned homeward so eagerly, it was now necessary instead to concentrate them on what we might do in the camp to improve our condition and, if possible, bring about quick relief. A pipe of tobacco was the first sign that the worst depression and despair had passed. And then I took some photographs, all trying to look as cheerful as possible.

Immediately after my misfortune with the Fokker I had suggested to Viglieri, as I have already said, that we ought soon to establish ourselves on the ice floe, partly because we would then be on the flying field itself, partly because the movements of the ice were easier to view from a large floe than from the constantly grinding ice, and partly because Cecioni, after laborious effort, was already on the floe, ready for transport. The ice having already begun to form a large number of canals, he could be returned to the tent only with the greatest difficulty.

Viglieri was fully in accord with my plan, and so it was agreed that on the following night we should begin the moving. There was no sense in doing so during the day. It was much too warm and the small pieces of ice between the big ones were entirely too un-

BEFORE THE OLD CAMP WAS MOVED

To the extreme left, the wrecked Fokker. To the left of the tent, Behounek prepares polar bear meat for dinner. Viglieri, to the right, is packing the collapsible life-boats. On the ice block beyond the radio mast are navigation instruments

steady to bear us. During the cold nights they were much firmer.

While the others went into the tent to eat a late breakfast, which I declined with thanks, I made a brief reconnaissance of our immediate surroundings. To be sure, I was very hungry after a very trying night, but still I was not entirely convinced that I really was stuck in the ice and therefore had to partake of the meals inside the anything but pleasant tent. As yet the filth on hands, ears, cheeks, scalps, etc. of my comrades reduced whatever appetite I might have had.

The floe on which the tent stood was composed not of one, but of an aggregation of ice blocks, some on edge, others lying horizontally, held together by one-year-old ice, forming a little field about eight by ten yards. We were still secure, but who could tell what the heat and a strong wind might do?

I first took a promenade to the Fokker plane to gather up the belongings I had there—my Browning, the box of medicaments, and my map case. Cecioni, who had crept up on one of the upper wings of the Fokker, which now rose a few inches over the snow, spoke and gesticulated animatedly, but of course I could not understand him. This much, however, I made out: he wanted a weapon, and when I offered my Browning he pointed instead to my rifle that had fallen out of the plane. I inserted a cartridge and turned it over to Cecioni, placing a box of cartridges beside him. I do not think it was fear of being attacked by polar bears that caused this precaution on the part of Cecioni. But it really was his purpose to shoot a polar bear, if possible, and thus supply the camp with an abundance of fresh food.

Then in spite of Cecioni's request, conveyed through signs, to remain behind and keep him company, I returned to the camp. Even during the short time that had passed since my trip to the Fokker, the ice had screwed around considerably. I noted this in many places because of the direction of my old footsteps in the snow, which in many instances were at right angles to their original direction.

After placing my valuables in the tent, I went back to the scene

of disaster of the *Italia*. A mass of rubbish indicated the place where the catastrophe had occurred. And yet most of it must have disappeared in the depths, since it very often happens that the larger ice blocks, at least, turn upside down. This can be detected by the brownish colour that some ice blocks have. This color comes from algæ which attach themselves to the under side of the ice. Hundreds of objects were still left, worth little out here on the pack ice, but of great value if this had been the mainland. The sun compass, for instance.

I saluted a dark and cold opening between two ice floes. It was there perhaps that Pomella had been let down to his final resting place. Now I was his most recent comrade out here—he was already gone but I was still alive.

In the catastrophe of the *Italia*, the dirigible, weighted down by ice formations, had been forced downward by the strong wind. Although everything possible had been done, a disaster was inevitable. The motor gondola in the stern had first been crushed against the pack ice, resulting in Pomella's death. Afterwards the forward gondola, containing the navigation cabin with the radio and the instruments for scientific investigations, had been crushed, wherefore the nine men inside had landed on the ice. It is miraculous that more of them were not injured and that those who were injured had escaped as comparatively whole-skinned as they had.

From what I learned later, none of those on board the *Italia* had formed any clear idea of what threatened them until just before the collision with the pack ice. About a quarter of an hour before this occurrence, according to their narrative, the command on board suddenly realized that something terrible might happen. But then there was nothing to do about it.

A minor part of the provisions, as stated, had by chance been in the gondola and, together with instruments and other contents, was scattered over a fairly small area and afterwards collected by the shipwrecked men. The remainder of the *Italia* had been carried away by the wind and probably exploded some miles from there,

judging by the enormous masses of smoke that had suddenly been seen.

I returned to the tent, where Viglieri now distributed a few crackers and chocolate. The conversation quite naturally turned again to our situation and the possibilities of rescue. I could speak English with Viglieri and Trojani; for Professor Behounek, German was better; and French was the language he used to make himself understood by the two just named. Add to these Italian, spoken by the four Italians themselves, and thus four languages were used by the six of us in order to make ourselves understood. I assured my comrades in misfortune that the Swedes at the first and best opportunity, perhaps even today, would come flying, if not to save us, at least to throw down all kinds of useful things with parachutes, so that we would by no means need to suffer even if there should be delay in the actual rescue. I produced a little cognac from my medicine kit, which I had brought from the Fokker on my latest visit, and we took a drink all around, which greatly heartened us. At this moment my thoughts returned to Dr. Gullström, the field surgeon at Linköping, who had packed my medicine kit with such care. Besides the cognac, I was able to share out, during the days that followed, its other contents as well.

For me it was very encouraging to hear, and to see for myself, that all the goods the Swedish Hansas had let fall were in the very best condition. Who could have believed that all the first-class cigarettes, the smoke of which we so eagerly inhaled, had come over the ice desert through the air and fallen down from the sky in a parachute? Also it was gratifying to know that the Swedish carbine that had been thrown down had not received the slightest scratch. Maddalena, too, had dropped a number of other things. But whether through bad luck or whether the attempt had been made from too great a height is a matter I wish to leave open: in any case, both the Italian carbines were broken; the cigars and cigarettes and crackers had landed in the salt water; and most of the fresh eggs were crushed.

Outside the tent stood the three collapsible boats dropped by

Maddalena, now mounted and ready. Viglieri had seen to it that a large part of the provisions and clothes were properly stowed away in the boats. As yet the Swedish boat was not inflated. It still lay in the rucksack and was intended for the radio apparatus.

I considered it my duty as well as my great joy to telegraph Captain Tornberg and personally tell him how invaluable under present conditions were the wares he had assembled in Sweden and which the Swedish Hansas had dropped to the *Italia's* men.

Midsummer Day passed slowly. The heat, always oppressive, did not improve conditions. The drinking water that we obtained by melting in an empty tin snow and old polar ice (which in the melting and freezing processes of years is freed from salt), was drunk from the glass shade of an electric lamp which had been found intact at the scene of the accident.

Toward evening we went over to the Fokker with the first load of provisions. It was an enormous task to make our way through the treacherous pack ice with our burdens. We stopped often and refreshed ourselves with some snow, which in a little while still more increased our desire for water. Our burdens were not very heavy, but under these conditions they felt heavier than the usual one-man load. Behounek spent the night at the plane together with Cecioni, who since early morning had lain alone on the underside of one of its upper wings. All the time the Husqvarna rifle that I had given him lay beside him; he said that he had been on a constant lookout for polar bears. He suffered terribly from sun blindness and we endeavoured to cure him by binding his head with cloths to keep out the sunlight. During the past days he had been careless enough to be out in the strong sunlight without sun glasses. But in spite of the fact that he now was unable to see anything, he still wanted the loaded gun beside him. I wonder just how he would have acted if a polar bear had come nosing around him.

After we had rested a while on the Fokker wing, we returned to the tent. Behounek, the scullery boy of the camp, followed within an hour to prepare the dinner—fried polar bear meat. He cut off a part of the leg and with large rusty scissors clipped the meat into

bits the size of a mouthful and broiled them on an aluminium plate over a fire made from the plywood of the *Italia* sprinkled with a little gasolene. Some pieces of butter which had been found in a little container in the gondola and which had been salvaged after the catastrophe, were used in the process, bear fat proving impossible for cooking. The result was a taste much too fishy and loathsome, even considering pack-ice conditions. Since neither salt nor any spices were available, the preparation of the meat was not more than primitive.

Of the original eight gallons of gasolene that were at hand there now remained about one-third. Knowing that I had a good supply of gasolene left in the Fokker, about fifty gallons, I made Behounek happy by saying that he no longer needed to be economical. How sad I was when two days later I discovered that quite naturally my gasolene, after the somersault, had leaked out on the snow through the air holes on the upper sides of the tanks.

When the meal was ready, we gathered in the tent, where Viglieri carefully distributed the meat into small tin cans made by the resourceful Cecioni from the aluminium plate of the gondola. Our pocket knives served as knife, fork, and spoon. Some days later Cecioni made spoons, and even his efforts to make forks were successful. I used a knife with a mother-of-pearl handle made in my father-in-law's factory—and it was free from rust! It excellently served my purpose. The meat—which if properly prepared would certainly have tasted good—was tough and fishy and I couldn't swallow it very well. When Viglieri noticed this, he gave me a piece of chocolate and a few crackers, saying:

"Out here on the ice you must eat, Lieutenant! This is the place for calories and not for epicures."

Later during my stay on the ice it was much easier to swallow polar bear meat. But then, too, my stomach was considerably emptier than during this late dinner of Midsummer Day at latitude 80 degrees.

In order to make the polar bear meat a little more palatable I discovered that in the cooking I could mix it with cracker crumbs.

PROFESSOR BEHOUNEK DOES THE HEAVY COOKING
To the left may be seen the skeleton of the bear which Malmgren shot

which served as a substitute for potatoes and vegetables. Then one day Biagi hit upon breaking a couple of eggs into the frying pan while he was cooking the meat and the result was really appetizing.

In the evening we listened to the radio messages between Rome and the *Città di Milano*. In a way it seemed rather sad to hear tales of how the chief was hailed at the ship on his arrival with the General. For since Jacobsson had reported about my somersault on the ice the chief had taken the General by air to the *Città di Milano*.

And I had been so confident that in but a few hours after my misfortune all the equipment that I had abandoned to make the plane as light as possible would be thrown down to me! Afterwards, however, I found that there had been a shortage of gasolene. It was not until later in the day that the *Quest* had arrived at the Russian Island base, and as early as 8 on Midsummer Eve the fog had enveloped Hinlopen Strait in a grey moist blanket.

GLACIER NO. I, JUST NORTH OF CAPE MITRA

CHAPTER VII

On the Ice Floe

THE first night in camp began by being just as sunshiny and warm as Midsummer Day itself. After having participated again in the transport of supplies to the Fokker, I was actually unable to do more and so lay down in the tent to try to sleep. Viglieri and Biagi continued and made two more trips, carrying all kinds of things.

It was impossible for me, however, to sleep. My thoughts drifted hither and thither. The confidence I had felt in an early, not to say immediate, rescue of us all by means of an airplane vanished when at 2 in the night, a slight northeasterly wind arose, bringing

with it a dense fog that rolled in over the polar regions like a mobile greyish-white wall.

I climbed upon a very high ice block and studied our approaching enemy. It was surprising to see how definitely outlined the fog was. No fog clouds came as forerunners of the succeeding solid mass—the fog poured in at once, heavy and wet. There it was, a hundred yards away—fifty yards away—and then it came upon us. It was, in itself, a phenomenon, but just now it was observed with anything but satisfaction.

Suddenly it grew very cold in the tent. Not alone the low external temperature, but still more the moisture prevented us from ever feeling really warm. We went about shivering all the time. And, furthermore, water and moisture penetrated into the tent from below, so that the uneven floor became wet and we ourselves became slowly drenched to the skin.

In a wireless sent to Nobile during the night we reported the fog and our fears, but upon receipt of the General's prompt reply telling us not to be afraid of the fog and to keep in good spirits, the prevailing sentiment grew more cheerful. This and many succeeding messages similarly worded, I realized later, were designed to make us feel calm. One must not call the contents of these telegrams deliberate untruths—on the contrary we should rejoice that *someone* saw the need for encouragement. After my return from the ice my comrades on the *Quest* told me that every evening they had composed and sent off telegrams from the *Città di Milano* to encourage me. Of all these I received only one, which contained a request for certain information regarding the possibility of landing seaplanes nearby. To this matter, however, I shall return a little later.

In order to save the batteries, certain hours were agreed upon for radio communication with the *Città di Milano*. At first it was every hour and later it was at 2 and 6 and 10, day and night. Toward the last it was again a little oftener. We awaited the stipulated hours with tremendous excitement. Biagi, the only one of us who fully mastered the radio had, consequently, an exceedingly

DRIFT ICE OFF SPITZBERGEN, SEEN FROM THE QUEST

difficult task. Furthermore, as he was the most industrious and most helpful of us all, I may be permitted to say that we had him to thank for our ultimate rescue.

During the discussion on Midsummer Day about the best plan of action, I proposed to Viglieri that Biagi should teach us the rudiments of the art of manipulating the radio. But as Viglieri considered that this would take too much time, nothing was done in the matter.

The monotonous, whining staccato of the receiving apparatus was now our music, very well liked and longed for, since it showed so emphatically that we were not entirely abandoned.

Toward morning we all lay as in a stupor in the tent. I got up several times during the night and picked my way through the irregular pack ice in the hope that a little exercise would bring on sleep.

But matters went badly in that respect. I again thought of my home and all the comrades and friends who at this moment were probably returning home from the Midsummer celebrations in a more or less lively mood. Did any of them yet know how I was fixed? It would be a comfort to be sure that the telegram about the rescue of the General had reached them all. I only hoped that it would take some time before the news about my misfortune would reach them.

At 8 in the morning Trojani, though considerably spent by his fever, began to prepare breakfast. He was the pastry cook of the camp, and it fell to his lot to prepare such delicacies as hot chocolate or milk.

This process was conducted in the tent on a Meta stove, which Maddalena had dropped. Bits of reindeer hair from the various pelts floated in the water taken from the tin, and as Trojani could not remove them all they disappeared en masse in the milk and chocolate, where it was not easy to see them.

The small tins that had remained unwashed in the tent since our meal of polar bear meat were now filled with carefully measured, thin, lukewarm milk made from a milk powder and to this were

added several wet crackers per man. The salt-water saturated biscuits would not dry at all in the moist fog. Instead we had to cover them up and they tasted anything but good. Some of us finally got the idea of putting the crackers in the milk, so that we should not notice how wet they were. Thus they became, of course, wetter than before. The milk was apportioned with the lamp-shade drinking-water dipper, and as it was used later for bouillon, bread soup, pemmican soup, milk and chocolate, and was never washed, the shade became very dark and it was especially disagreeable to drink water from it. Although all saw the filth, no one attempted to remove it. But within twenty-four hours my stomach and my appetite adjusted themselves to the conditions, so that I could truthfully tell my comrades that I considered my breakfast as good as that to which ordinary people are accustomed.

During the day we lay apathetically in the tent. I envied those who could sleep, since for me it was practically impossible to get a wink of slumber. Once I went out to the ice floe and the Fokker, where Behounek stood bareheaded staring into space. Cecioni still slept in his sleeping bag, always with my rifle at full cock by his side. Neither Behounek nor Cecioni had had any food since the day before, and because Behounek felt that he had no right to take the provisions found in the Fokker, I promised to try later to bring him some of our rations. The Professor and I talked a while and discussed the situation. At the moment he considered the outlook rather desperate and thought—especially if he did not get proper food—that he could hardly hold out much longer.

The moving of the tent and the rest of our duds was not to take place before late at night, for even now, in spite of the fog, the ice was not easy to cross during the day. At 2 o'clock dinner was eaten in a gloomy mood. We had pemmican soup, and if it had only been warm it would probably have tasted good. Now it slipped down more for the sake of the calories. I was told that during the first two days after the catastrophe the pemmican was eaten raw and that it tasted still worse.

Pemmican is, in fact, a kind of concentrated food, much used

by the Arctic population. It consists of meat, fat, and vegetables, prepared in such a way that the whole forms small cakes. One such cake per day is sufficient for a man doing regular work. Since we were now on half rations, only a smaller piece had been prepared per person for the soup I have described. A piece of Cloetta vitamin chocolate per person, taken from the little supply I had brought along in my flying clothes, created a general sensation. The camp chocolate was coarser and harder to eat. My kind had a lemon flavour and this was obviously popular.

Gloomily I thought of my large fine rucksack that I had left behind on Russian Island in order that on my second start from the floe I could take as much useful cargo as possible. If I only had had it here! Chocolate in quantities, apples, tea, sugar, salt. Primus kerosene burner, tent, cognac, and a couple of giant beef sandwiches —all would have tasted wonderful now! But I still did have a little cognac left in my medicine kit. It was a matter of one drink per person today also—by way of comfort in the sorrow over the rucksack.

At 9 in the evening we continued the transfer of our camp after we had eaten our supper—a little corned beef and a little piece of cracker. Before we shut off the radio, we listened to the day's news from the powerful broadcasting station, San Paolo, outside Rome. We heard how General Nobile had been saved by the chief of the Swedish rescue expedition, Captain Tornberg, and how Milan had received this joyful news with flags and ringing of bells.

Considering our condition and our state of mind, the work we did this night between 9 and 6 was the equivalent of more than two ordinary days' work per man. Heavy storage batteries, radio apparatus, pemmican boxes, the raw bearskin, instruments, etc., were dragged painfully the two hundred or more yards over the pack ice. Now and then we caught our breath, ate snow, and were revived by it for a moment—only to be more tired and thirsty after another hour's work, as was only natural.

Trojani was much too ill to assist with these transfers. Instead he repaired the tent, which during its month of service as a home

THE NEW CAMP SITE CLOSE TO THE WRECKED FOKKER

for as many as nine men had become very worn. But it was an excellent tent. Marvellous that it had lasted as long as this! To be sure, we were crowded when all six of us were inside, and I cannot yet fathom how the nine men, in the days immediately following the catastrophe and before the Malmgren group set out, could possibly have been housed. They lay packed like sardines, I was told.

When at last the tent had been moved to the flying field, we had to find a good camp site. It was now camp number three that we were going to put in order. The first one had been at the scene of the disaster; the second was the one we had just left. Subsequently, I learned from Viglieri that the tent had to be moved yet another time—camp site number four, in other words. This was after I had been taken off the ice by Schyberg. The change was made because of the melting ice, which threatened to drown them all. Camp site number four was selected in the middle of the flying field.

We looked around. First of all, the ice foundation below us must be secure; second, neither the tent nor the radio mast must stand in the way of an eventual landing or start with an airplane. I suggested a place just beside the body of my overturned Fokker, and it was accepted. The snow and loose ice were removed. Luckily I had two snow shovels with me in my plane. In the meantime I attacked the wings of my Fokker with my hunting knife in order to get as good a foundation for the tent as possible from the plywood and the watertight wing coverings. Calmly I thought of what my comrades at home would have said if they had seen me make this vigorous attack on the delicate and valuable wings of the Fokker. But, after all, I did it so that my fellows and I might better sustain life in our misfortune. Now there was no time to reflect on what other people might think.

When I had finally cut out a piece of about the area of the floor of the tent and this had been placed on the ice, the tent was pitched over it. On this foundation the floor covering of the tent itself was spread, and upon this two of the Italian satin parachutes, with which Maddalena had dropped food provisions and other

CAMP SITE NO. 3 UNDER THE TAIL OF THE FOKKER
To the left Viglieri is busy with the radio mast

supplies. The Swedish parachutes were much smaller and, besides, were red. Therefore they were more suited for signalling than for tent-floor covering. Finally, over the whole was spread the uncured bearskin and some smaller reindeer furs, which nevertheless did not fully cover the floor. Everything was wet through and through, but at least we had something to rest on. And so the tent was ready.

The radio receiver and other apparatus were placed at the left inside the entrance. The receiving antenna that now had been replaced by the radio antenna from the Fokker, left behind when the radio apparatus was originally taken out, was laid on the snow for a distance of about 50 yards. Alongside and parallel to it, also on the snow, was laid out the ground wire.

Cecioni established himself in the inner left corner of the tent, his back propped against the wooden box that contained the chocolate, etc. He never lay down, but sat in his corner night and day, sleeping now and then, to be sure, but mostly remaining awake. He himself had put splints on his broken leg, using parts of the dirigible. It was primitive but very practical. All lamented deeply that Cecioni had been injured in the catastrophe, not least because he was so practical and resourceful and could have been of invaluable assistance had he been in his full vigour. And even now I cannot understand how he could be in such fine spirits. He laughed and joked many times when we were sad and dejected, and only when there was some doubt about the arrival of the *Krassin* did he also become a little depressed.

When we sometimes talked about the Swedish planes and all that they were to bring us, he became especially bright and would raise and lower his hand while uttering the easily understood word "*medicinale*." This was his way of expressing a hope that the Swedes would come again and would bring cognac and whisky with them. And he certainly was right in looking upon these things as medicaments. As much as all consumption of liquor during work is to be deplored, especially in polar regions, so much is freedom to drink desirable during impatient hours of waiting.

To the right and at right angles to the entrance, Behounek

and I and Trojani and Viglieri found places in the order named, counting from the entrance of the tent. Biagi appropriated Cecioni's sleeping bag out on the Fokker wings. He was better off there than in the tent, in spite of the fact that at the time of the radio contacts, he had to crawl in and out of the tent many times.

Some ten yards from the tent, yet placed in such a way as not to impede the free passage of an airplane, we raised the radio antennæ. Alongside the sending apparatus we placed some provisions and the Swedish rubber boat, to be used, if needed, for the radio apparatus.

We still had a number of odds and ends to collect from the old camp but, feeling that we had worked enough for one night, we did not attempt any further moving. The fog still lay heavy around us. It felt cold and damp, therefore we were much invigorated on this morning of June 26 by our rations—lukewarm chocolate, bread and crackers. Now that we had learned the art, the crackers steeped in the chocolate tasted very good.

All fell into a heavy sleep, and even Biagi, who was on watch, dozed a little on his sleeping bag outside. Then suddenly we were awakened by Biagi's cry: "Polar bear!"

With the greatest speed I got hold of my shoes and without lacing them crawled out of the tent and grabbed the rifle, which Biagi already had seized but which at this moment I preferred to hold myself. And look! Out there Bruin was making his way over the floe toward the pack ice and his own safety. I rushed after him some score yards until he was just on the pack-ice edge of the floe, and then the firing began, not only from my rifle, but from the Swedish and Italian carbines as well, with Biagi and Viglieri respectively as marksmen.

I noticed that my second shot wounded Bruin. He uttered a long-drawn-out *oooh* and threw up his head so that the neck, hardly visible before, was seen at its full length. But since he had gotten out among the projecting peaks and ridges of the pack ice, it availed little for me to run forward the remaining fifty yards on the floe and from a fairly high ice block, send a few more shots after him.

Slowly he trotted off in the direction of Foyn in a large circle, avoiding the ice floe and us.

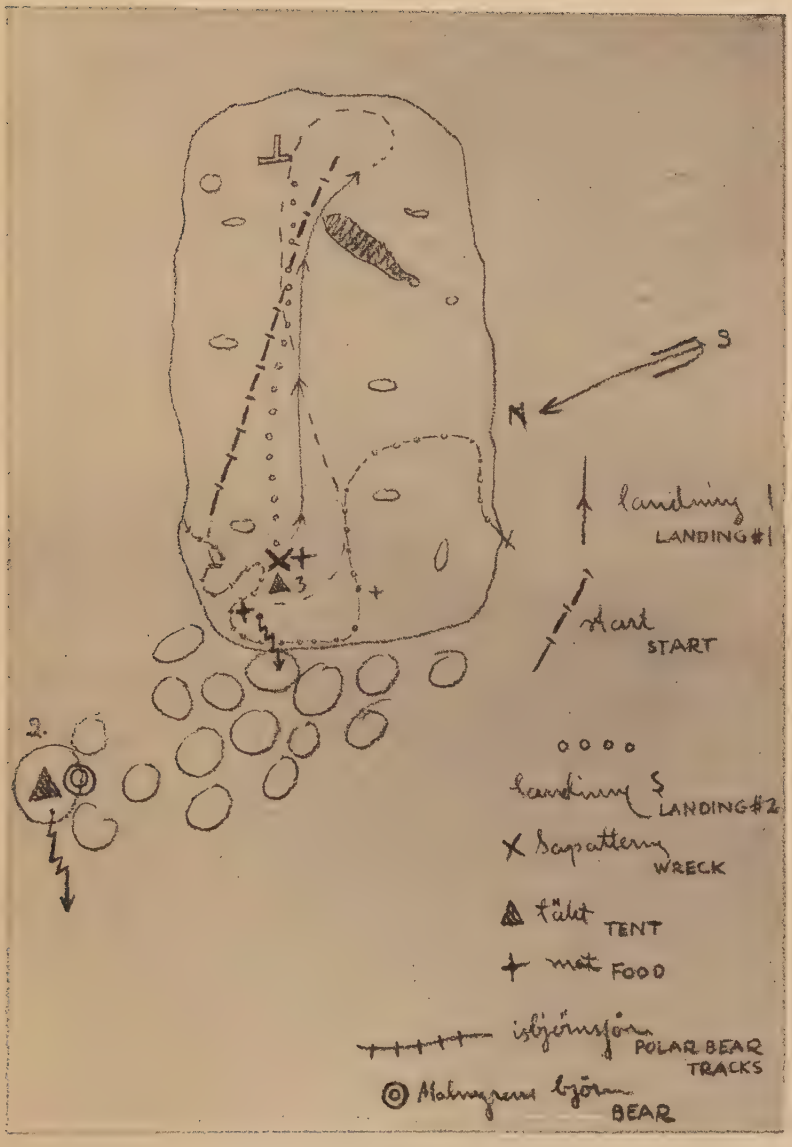
Counting this bear, the men had seen seven since the day of the catastrophe. In a way, Malmgren had said, it was a good sign that polar bears turned up: this indicated that we were fairly near land. The wind came from the ice floe toward the coast, and, with the good scent that polar bears seem to have, this brute, too, had thought a good meal was to be had.

I studied the bear tracks on the ice a little more closely, and to my great amazement found that Bruin had been only two or three yards from our tent, going directly to the radio mast and the supply of provisions stored close by and had even rolled over in the snow about fifteen yards from the camp. And we had heard nothing!

Viglieri was very much disappointed that we had missed fire, thereby losing a chance to get enough fresh meat for at least a month's supply. Behounek, on the other hand, was delighted that we had not taken better aim. Bear meat had not proved appetizing to the good professor. He still retained some of his ample corpulence, and with it also, I suppose, traces of his civilized taste. So far as I was concerned, I have to admit that, like the professor, I was not fond of polar bear meat, but I must add that this had in no wise affected my aim. For naturally, shooting a polar bear would have been an interesting experience.

At this point they told the story of the polar bear laid low by Malmgren. It had obviously been very hungry for, when the contents of its stomach were examined, only a piece of an English newspaper had been found. I happened to mention this fact on a later occasion, and, as usual, the story was distorted in retelling. Luckily, however, I was not quoted as authority for the information. A number of papers ventured to relate that in the polar bear's stomach an Italian newspaper and various articles of clothing had been found, wherefrom the conclusion was at once drawn that the men in the "balloon group" had been devoured by polar bears.

The polar bear's visit prompted us to organize our guard duty



CAPTAIN LUNDBORG'S SKETCH OF THE LANDING FIELD ON THE ICE

The upper oval is the field where the Fokker landed, the tent, radio mast, etc. At the lower left corner under the figure 2 is the old camp, from which Nobile was taken Midsummer Eve

a little better. Every one except Cecioni got his assignment, varying from two to four hours, depending on the weather. At first Trojani was excused because of his fever, but later he was sufficiently restored to take Biagi's place, who in his turn fell ill. During the first days I was never permitted to stand guard, but once, Viglieri sleeping very heavily when his turn came, I took his place, and afterwards was not content unless I got my share of the watch.

On the 27th the fog still lay as heavy as ever, but in the morning the sun appeared through the mist for a little while, thus enabling Viglieri to take our position. The wind was north-northwest and in consequence of this as well as of the current, we were on this day considerably farther south than before—and even farther west.

During the day we had many heartening telegrams from General Nobile, in all of which he extended personal greetings to me. Also through Commander Romagna on the *Città di Milano* I received a greeting from Mussolini—a greeting and thanks, something that my Italian comrades said I ought to feel very proud of. And I was, too—but what would a thousand such telegrams avail me in my present predicament? It must be admitted, however, that they encouraged us all greatly.

On this day we had bear meat for breakfast as well as dinner, and although Behounek and I did not exactly complain, still we felt that it was a little too much. Biagi and Cecioni seemed to be the two who most patiently endured the bear meat. Especially Biagi who took his portion not bit by bit, as we others painfully did, but several pieces at a time.

Through the fog which temporarily lifted on the 28th, we discovered Cape Leigh Smith very near. The sun itself paid us a visit, and that also encouraged us greatly.

Through our receiving set we could hear the *Città di Milano* clearly; our sending apparatus, however, did not seem to function to full satisfaction, judging by the repeated messages we received that our radio reports were not clearly understood on the ship. The radio engineer on the *Città di Milano* suspected that

THE RADIO RECEIVER AT THE FOKKER CAMP
Left to right: Behounek, Viglieri, and Biagi

the new site we had selected for our sending apparatus upon moving to the flying field was not suitable, and sent instructions to change the direction of the antennæ.

We had polar bear for breakfast on that day too. I was greatly amazed that the meat had not yet given out. Instead of being fastidious, I ought to have been very thankful that we still had fresh food on hand, and surely our general condition would have been much worse if we had not had this scurvy-remedy every day. But still, the stomach growled a bit.

During the day I inspected the flying field and decided to begin improving it gradually. I took down a pair of my skis that were attached to the body of my Fokker and, armed with an ice pick and shovel, set out to look for work. It was assuredly not hard to find here. There was an abundance of large icy protuberances that called for removal, but I certainly could not accomplish much in my sorry condition. After about an hour's work I was dead tired and therefore returned to the tent.

While I was at my task on the field, Viglieri, Behounek and Biagi had made their way to the old camp to fetch some of Maddalena's rubber boats, provisions, and other goods. On their return to the flying field they had to use one of the boats to make their way across a very wide channel that suddenly had opened up while they were on the old camp site. Viglieri and Biagi got along beautifully, but it was more difficult to transport the professor. Although the situation as a whole was serious enough for all of us, I could not help smiling at the bulky scientist who practically filled one of the smaller boats. We fastened a line to each end of it and when the professor, after no little effort, had accommodated himself to it, I towed him over to my side of the lane and pulled both the boat and the professor up on top of a low-lying ice floe. Thereafter the boat was hauled back to the other shore.

Since a number of new channels began to appear around the flying field, they became a fresh source of anxiety. None of us knew very much about the movements of the ice up in these polar regions, but because of the abundance of ice and snow in Sweden I, as a

matter of course, considered myself as the expert on the subject I made it clear that we must study every new channel formation, and it became one of the unwritten laws for the man on guard to report immediately when something of importance in this respect occurred.

Toward afternoon the temperature began to drop to below freezing, and as the wind sprang up and its direction was very suitable for landing, I gathered some flags and signal banners and again set out for the field to mark the many places that we had not yet had time to prepare. And since at times the weather was very fine, I could not understand why no planes were sighted. But I had not taken into consideration that it was far from our camp to Hinlopen Strait and even farther to Kings Bay and that the fog might be as heavy as ever over those places. To our great joy, however, we received news later in the day that a large air expedition was about to start for our field. We jumped high with joy and already regarded ourselves as saved. The expedition probably did start and in wretched weather made an attempt to reach us, but it had to turn back on account of the fog.

As evening came on I discovered Great Island from my newly established observation post on the projecting tail of the Fokker. While this became an occasion for rejoicing because we were nearing land, it aroused our longing again for unattainable firm ground under our feet.

In the evening I received a telegram from the *Città di Milano,* addressed to me personally, which gladdened me exceedingly. It was sent by Colonel Virgin, inspector for the Swedish Engineering Service, who, in his own name and that of all the officers, expressed the desire that we might all soon see each other again. It was a very welcome message. As the telegram was in Swedish and Biagi understood nothing of what he was writing, I consider this telegram as a unique possession.

During the night before the 29th the weather was very bad. The wind blew strongly from the northwest and the snow fell at intervals in small sharp flakes. On this occasion my watch came

between 4 and 8 in the morning, and it seemed very strange to be once more fulfilling the duties of a common soldier. That morning I smoked my last pipe of decent tobacco. But there was an abundance of smoking supplies, so I resorted to cigarettes. I had to laugh to myself as I went around with a cigarette in my mouth during the watch. I, who formerly had so decidedly objected to cigarettes, had now silenced my own scruples. For I smoked one cigarette after another and felt excellent. My diary for that day reveals: "My first fag." But it was by no means my last. For smoking became our only available stimulant during the long days of waiting.

During my watch, as I covered up the cigarettes and cigars which had been laid out to dry, I got the idea of trying a cigar. I clipped off the wettest part of a cigar with Behounek's polar bear scissors, lit it, and entered the tent. All were asleep except Cecioni and as he, too, wanted a cigar, I went out and prepared one for him.

This was a day of poor radio connexions. Messages had to be repeated several times before we could understand them. So much we did grasp, that four large seaplanes were ready to start for the camp as soon as the weather permitted. Nobile promised us such a quantity of useful and good things that we would actually leave our ice floe with regret once we received them. But the weather was very undependable, and the expedition never started. On that day I received the only one of the telegrams that had been sent to me by my comrades of the *Quest*. To cap the climax, this telegram, already referred to, contained no more than a request for orientation. For the chief bade me let him know the first moment possible when there was a chance for seaplanes to land near us, whereupon the Swedish Hansas would start immediately. Although this telegram was a message of joy, it irritated me greatly. I wrote a telegram —fortunately it never was sent—in which I told the chief "that there had been a chance for the seaplanes to drop my rucksack and other equipment ever since 4:30 on the morning of Midsummer Day." After my return to the *Quest*, when I told this episode to my

comrades, I learned for the first time about the many telegrams which had been sent but which had never reached me.

During an inspection tour I found large water-filled holes in the ice but, however I might search, I could discover no suitable plumb line. On this day I sent a desperate telegram to General Nobile, as follows:

To General Nobile:

PARTS OF OUR FIELD HAVE BECOME VERY BAD YESTERDAY AND TODAY. THERE IS WATER UNDER THE SNOW, AND THE WATER MAKES THE ICE VERY, VERY BAD. THE PLACE WHERE THE T NOW LIES IS BETTER, BUT THE WEATHER BEING VERY WARM I DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG THE FIELD WILL REMAIN AVAILABLE.

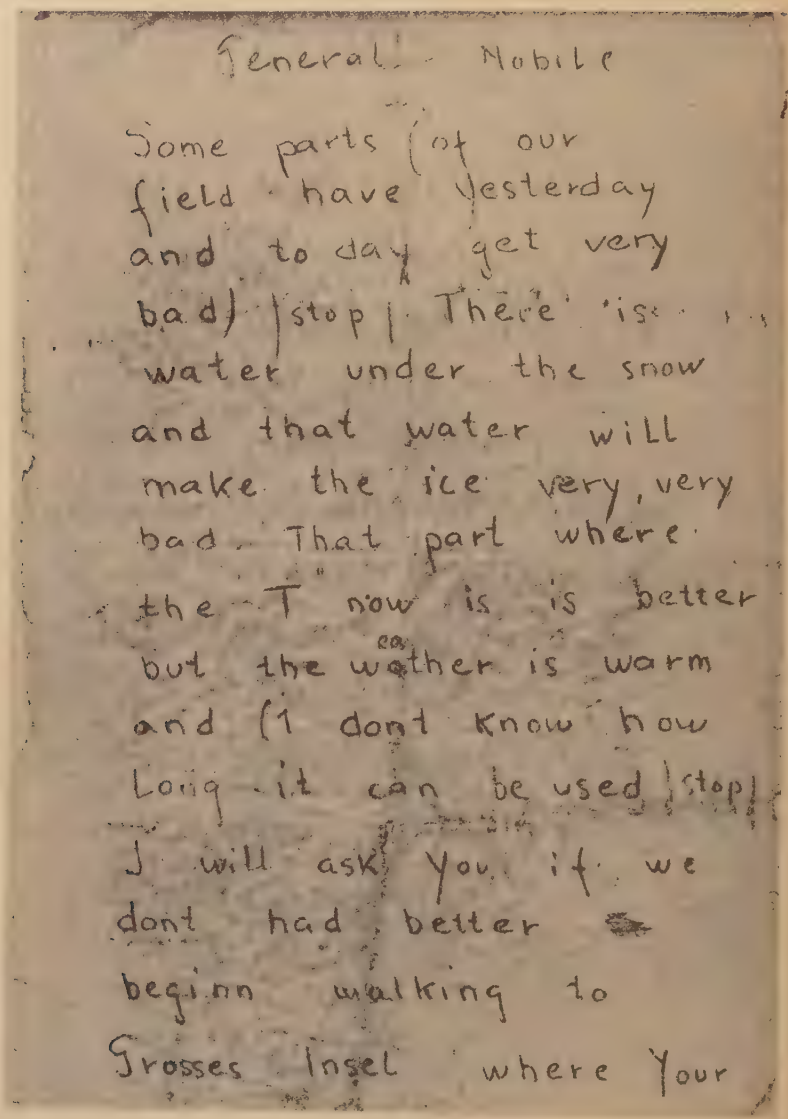
I ASK YOU IF IT WOULD NOT BE WISER FOR US TO TRY TO GET TO GREAT ISLAND, WHERE YOUR FLIERS COULD DROP PROVISIONS TO US UNTIL THE ICE-BREAKER CAN REACH US. I BEG YOU TO CONSIDER MY PROPOSAL AND TO ANSWER AT LEAST TOMORROW IF NOT TODAY. PERHAPS YOU WOULD THEN ALSO GIVE INSTRUCTIONS AS TO THE BEST WAY FOR US TO GO.

Lundborg.

For we had had a lively discussion regarding the possibilities of our reaching Great Island. My suggestion was that we ought all to try to make for land and that we should even take the injured Cecioni with us. I sent the telegram in order that we might get honest advice from the General as to the course to be pursued. Nor did it take long for the answer to come. The General most emphatically advised against any kind of march over the ice. Instead we ought calmly to await the arrival of the *Krassin* which was proceeding to our relief at the greatest speed.

On the morning of June 30, it brightened. The fog disappeared, and the sun shone. From my lookout on the Fokker I could again see the glaciers of Great Island, and now I could even catch glimpses of the outline of the shore itself.

Viglieri and I together went over the field on skis, and to our great joy we found that the below-freezing temperature that now

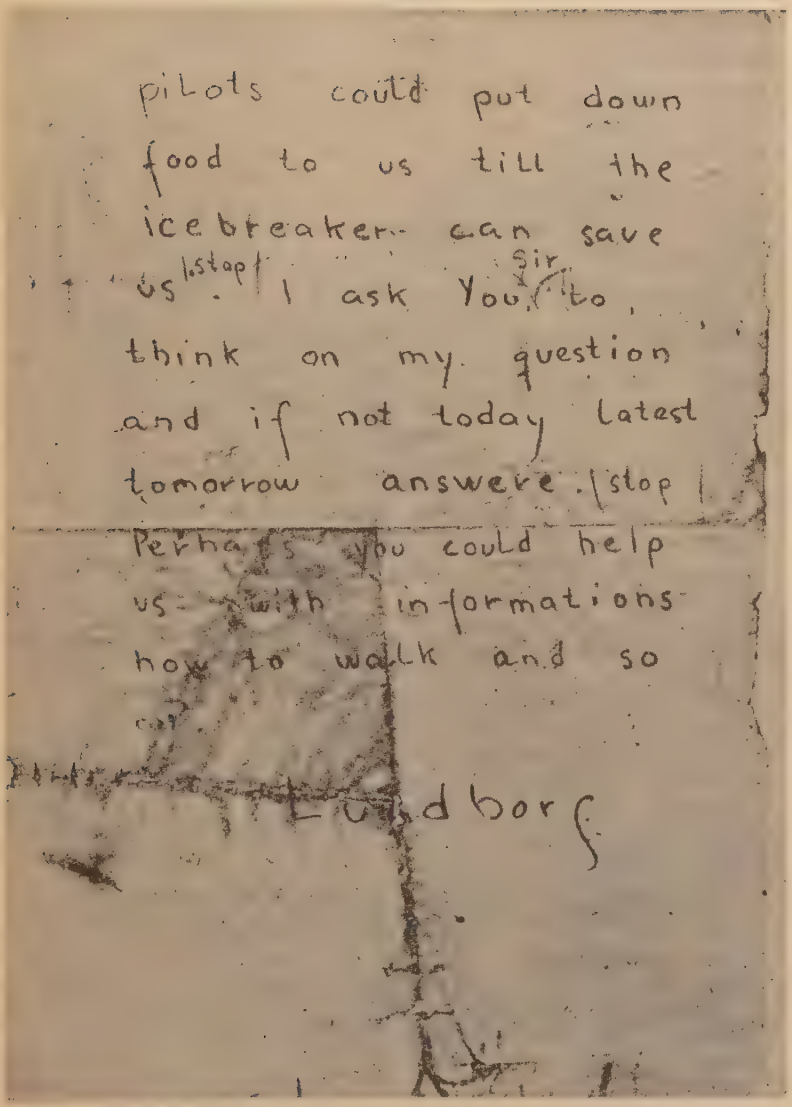


General - Nobile

Some parts (of our
field have yesterday
and to day get very
bad) (stop) There is
water under the snow
and that water will
make the ice very, very
bad. That part where
the "T" now is is better
but the weather is warm
and (I dont know how
Long it can be used (stop)
I will ask You if we
dont had better
beginn walking to
Grosses Insel where Your

CAPTAIN LUNDBORG'S TELEGRAM TO GENERAL NOBILE
Asking advice about a march toward land

(*Continued*)



pilots could put down
food to us till the
ice breaker can save
us. |stop| I ask You, sir, to
think on my question
and if not today latest
tomorrow answere. |stop|
Perhaps you could help
us with informations
how to walk and so
on.

Ludborg

prevailed had sufficiently improved the field to make a landing possible. Early in the morning we sent a report about this matter to the *Città di Milano,* but after the telegram had gone, I was greatly concerned about an eventual landing by any plane. For what would the whole world say if, upon my advice, a flier tried to land and failed?

As a direct answer to this telegram, we received news from the General that a Swedish sport plane was on its way to Spitzbergen and that a Swedish Fokker plane of the same type as No. 31 would also arrive. Since we have none too many sport planes in Sweden, I figured out that it was probably one of the Moth planes of the Aeromateriel Company, and this later proved to be correct.

Toward afternoon we received a long telegram from Nobile saying that three large seaplanes and the Finnish Junker plane, which had been provided with skis, would set out at 11 that night for the camp.

Once again the General asked whether or not it would be possible for a Junker plane to land on our field. Again I went over the area, and as a result telegraphed that I could not answer definitely, not knowing what type of skis the Junker had. Meanwhile I expressed my opinion that with the greatest care it might be possible to land with the Junker if my landing marks were carefully observed.

In the General's telegram it had also been stated that the *Krassin* was at North Cape and might be expected at our camp in *two or three days.* This news gladdened us unspeakably, and we all decided that it would be better not to risk a landing out here just now, in view of the favourable prospects for an early rescue.

Toward evening the thaw set in again, and at times it snowed quite hard. The field was wet, with large water pools under a thin ice coating. And since the weather, particularly in the region of the camp, was quite unsuitable for flying, we again became quite desperate. We feared that an air expedition could not reach us this time, either.

The night before July 1, just a week after I had landed on the

AT THE FOKKER CAMP

Biagi, Lundborg, and Viglieri. To the right, packages of food carefully wrapped

floe, I crossed it alone. Judging by present conditions—in spots there was about 20 inches of water under a thin ice coating—I realized that it would be impossible to effect a landing. I was seized by the most bitter despair, and only by concentrating my thoughts on wife and home was I able to convince myself that all was not yet hopeless.

What, after all, was a week's stay on the ice compared with the five-weeks' imprisonment of my companions! I was ashamed of myself for having lost hope. I crawled into the tent and told Viglieri about my investigations. During the next radio connexion he sent a telegram to the General with a report about the field. This report aroused a slight discussion among my comrades in the tent. They talked mostly in Italian, so I could not understand all they said, but this much I grasped, that they blamed me for not giving a definite and final decision on the landing possibilities. But every one who has had anything to do with flying knows that a field like this can change, just as the weather can be beautiful, sunny and cold one moment, and in the next few minutes can become the worst imaginable.

One matter we all agreed upon, namely, that henceforward we would concentrate our hopes on the *Krassin* alone, unless we defied the General's strict objection and attempted a march toward Cape Leigh Smith.

Our tent had now sunk considerably into the ice, and it was beginning to be insufferably damp inside. For several days I had been very wet and now I took out an old flying suit from the "wardrobe" on the Fokker wing and laid it over my place in the tent. For some hours, in consequence, my bunk was dry, but before long the water began to soak through. Behounek and I had the main part of the raw bearskin under us, but as this was drenched, we might almost as well have removed it. A reindeer-skin coat left by the General, which I had appropriated some days before to make the cushion from the pilot's seat of the plane into a softer pillow for myself, had also begun to absorb the moisture so that now I did not even have anything dry under my head. Behounek and I

WAITING FOR THE SWEDISH HANSAS

In the foreground the three collapsible rubber boats, inflated and packed for an emergency. In front of the tent stands the tin can in which snow was melted for drinking-water

used the Fokker's large tarpaulin as covering. To be sure, it was not heavy, but at least it was desirable to have something over us, even if this something was a stiff tarpaulin. Ever since the first fog had come, I had worn my flying suit day and night, and that too had absorbed some of the water so that my body did not feel dry even when I rose.

According to plans the promised air expedition, which was to be directed by our short-wave radio, was to have been with us at 12 noon. Biagi did indeed sit faithfully at his sending apparatus for several hours, but as no planes appeared, even though the weather in our region was fine, at 3 o'clock he again spread the flag over his radio.

During the day the wind was southeasterly and very fresh. So at least we had reason to rejoice that the floe was not being carried out to sea. Always some consolation in the midst of trouble.

We ate our supper on this day, July 1, in dejection, because since forenoon we had not been able to make our radio function properly. Toward evening we were able to record a temperature of 25 degrees Fahrenheit and, knowing that the cold ought to improve the field for landing with a light plane, the frost was a source of joy for that evening.

In the midst of our gloom we invented a game, Behounek and I. We capitalized our lives, forming the "Polar Sea Shipwrecked Company." Then with great formality we played the market according to outlook and personal mood. The bids varied considerably. As an average, I recall 40 to 60 below par; still the Czech professor sometimes found that he could offer up to 80 percent of the nominal value of my life shares.

Those who slept the worst and the least of all were surely Behounek and myself. Instead we talked much and "made smoke," as the professor called it. We talked often about Malmgren. Behounek and he had been very good friends, and the Czech scientist had none but words of praise for his Swedish colleague.

Zappi and Mariano had been the first to suggest a journey toward land. When Biagi also wanted to go with them, Malmgren

had definitely said no, because Biagi was the only one wholly competent to manage the radio. Instead Malmgren offered to go along, and the two corvette captains had seemed satisfied with the substitution. The General had said that whoever wished might go, but that he himself intended to remain with the injured Cecioni. The General wanted them to wait a few days, for perhaps radio connexions might be established with the outer world; but finally one evening they set off. They took food enough for fifty days, double pairs of reindeer-skin shoes, compass, sextant, chronometer, and charts, but, the camp having but one weapon—the Colt pistol with which Malmgren had killed the bear and for which only six rounds now remained—they set out unarmed. Behounek gave Malmgren a letter to his sister and one to his sweetheart to be turned over by Malmgren to them if Behounek were not saved within two months. These letters never reached their destination. Malmgren had a bad contusion of his left shoulder; according to the description it was probably a compound fracture of the collar bone.

The three men bade a warm farewell to those who remained behind, and were off. Two whole days after their departure they could be seen from the camp like black points on the ice.

The conversation with Behounek enlivened me greatly. Usually it happened that I was a little more cheerful when he was depressed, and when I was depressed he frequently restored my spirits. In such manner we kept up each other's humour. Sometimes we would talk about warm baths, sheets, soap and clean clothes, music and other things. To my question as to what the professor would now like most in the way of food, if he had a choice, Behounek once answered:

"First of all a good Swedish extra *smörgåsbord* with schnapps and Pilsener—the last naturally from Pilsen. And before I had had time to eat my fill of this, then some new idea would surely come to me as to what I might want afterwards."

During the night before July 2, it was very cold, with a strong southeasterly wind. The radio, however, did not work, and there-

fore we had no news from the *Città di Milano* for some time.

After we had drunk our chocolate at 7 in the morning, I decided to take a couple of morphine tablets from my medicine kit, hoping these might help me to get a few hours' sleep. I had not slept a wink for several days and felt terrifyingly depressed in every way. Immediately after swallowing the tablets, I felt my whole body grow numb, and it did not take many minutes before I was sleeping heavily. At 12 I was awakened by the call to dinner. The last piece of polar bear meat was eaten that day. I thought of Malmgren. How strange it was! A countryman of mine had given his comrades in misfortune and myself fresh food, and he himself had gone —perhaps without food—perhaps to his death.

Toward evening the radio began to work again. We received word that the *Krassin* had advanced halfway between North Cape and Cape Platen, but had there encountered very difficult ice conditions. And there were we who had hoped that the ice-breaker would be with us by now, that having been promised for some days past! We understood that the first message about the *Krassin* was sent merely to encourage us, but in the same degree that that message had caused us to rejoice, the present one led us to fear that the *Krassin*, in spite of everything, would never reach us.

Further, we received instructions again to change our antennæ so that their direction would correspond more closely to the sending angle from Virgo Harbour where the *Città di Milano* now lay. Also we were to change our wave length. Earlier this had been 33 metres both for sending and receiving, but the radio engineer on the *Città di Milano* now suggested that we should use 46 metres for receiving and 47 for sending. After these changes had been put into effect, we were heard and could hear much better. Later in the day we got new information about the *Krassin*, which slowly but surely was making its way through the heavy pack ice. Besides, we found out that Captain Tornberg shortly intended to arrange a new Swedish base in the neighbourhood of Cape Leigh Smith; just as soon, in fact, as the little Moth plane had been mounted and tested in flight.

SIESTA ON THE FOKKER WING

Left to right: Captain Lundborg, Professor Behounek, Trojani, and Cecioni with his broken leg on two ski staves

As the next day was my wife's birthday, I got Viglieri's permission, despite the difficulties with the batteries, to send her a telegram. It actually arrived on the day and read as follows:

I AM STILL ON THE ICE, BUT WILL SURELY BE RESCUED IN A FEW DAYS. MY BEST WISHES ON YOUR BIRTHDAY.

Einar.

My wife told me later that she had expected to hear something from me on her birthday. She had gone for a walk with her mother and they had made a wager as to the receipt of a telegram. My wife won.

For supper that evening we had corned beef, crackers, Swedish *knäckebröd* with marmalade, and a very large piece of chocolate for each. This large extra distribution was justified by the following reasons: *first*, it was Viglieri's birthday—he was twenty-eight; *second*, the polar bear meat was used up; and *third*, we were celebrating my wife's birthday a day in advance.

After the distribution of the chocolate some crumbs remained, which all wanted. Now, as well as at all subsequent distributions, we gambled for these morsels. It was amusing to see how the five of us who lost followed, with eager glances, the course of the little bits toward the wide-open mouth of the fortunate winner.

Toward midnight Viglieri, Biagi, and I took our last promenade to the old camp to get some things that still were left there. The original plan was that Behounek, too, should go along, but as the ice was breaking and as there was some risk in jumping over the ice cakes in spite of the cold, Viglieri left the less limber professor on the much safer landing field. The most important object we brought back was the large Möwe boat, which had come with the visit of Maddalena. It was supposed to seat six persons, but I secured Viglieri's promise that in an emergency I should not have to be one of the six, for I considered the other smaller but considerably stronger boats much more stable.

The ice having broken up a great deal during the past few days,

I began to fear on my journey back from the old camp that soon the same would happen to the flying field, and that then all would be over. My fears were, moreover, substantiated in part, for on the following day I observed through field-glasses from my outpost on the Fokker that the ice had split up on the old camp site and that a mass of large ice blocks had turned over.

For the remainder of the night before the 3rd of July and during the whole next day it was very cold. The wind, which was very strong, shifted during these twenty-four hours from southeast to northeast, and therefore we came much nearer Foyn Island and the coast. With the southeasterly wind we had looked for a clearing of the sky, but this did not happen. However, nearly all the time the clouds had been so light in the morning, at the hour for taking the elevation of the sun, that our positions could be determined.

The daily ritual was as follows:

At about five o'clock in the morning, Greenwich time, a dialogue would start between Viglieri and Behounek.

"Is the sun visible?"

"Yes. Slightly, for a few moments."

"Will you, Professor, be kind enough to help with the chronometers?" (As can be seen, titles were very important.)

"Yes, Commandant."

"Well, then, I am starting out."

. . . .

"I am ready."

"I am, too."

"Attention!"

"All ready!"

"Thirty-three degrees, fourteen minutes, thirty seconds."

"Seven minutes, fourteen and one-fifth seconds past five."

. . . .

"How many have we now?"

"Six."

"Enough!"

"Very well, Commandant!"

In a little while after the valuable instruments had been covered, Viglieri would come in and take out his cracked case with logarithm and other tables and begin to count, draw, and make calculations. So about 10 o'clock (we were one hour and 54 minutes ahead of Greenwich time, which was taken carefully at 8 every evening) when the sun's elevation had been taken, we had our exact position laid out on Viglieri's nautical chart, and therewith began the always identical discussion for the day, in which we weighed matters pro and con. I took a lively part in these talks, but since my Italian vocabulary was limited to *vento*, *tempo*, *campo*, *molto*, *buono*, Cecioni, Biagi and I had to resort to sign language to make ourselves understood without an interpreter.

During the day I slept now and then, but most of the time I sat alone, awake and smoking in the tent. My thoughts naturally dwelt on my wife and her birthday. As yet I had not had an opportunity to be with her on a single birthday since our first meeting six years ago. I now sat here alone in the tent and meditated. The others lay like wet bundles of rags on the drenched tent floor and snored. It became one of my diversions to study their different snoring tones.

Early in the morning came the news from the *Città di Milano* that the Swedish planes had tried to fly out to us during the night but that they had had to turn back at Cape Leigh Smith because of the fog. Further, Nobile asked us to report without special request the condition of the field, the visibility, the temperature, and the like, every time we had connexions.

At 7 in the morning the ice along the north side of the field began to move. The ice blocks parted with terrific cracking and rumbling and a big wide channel was formed. The movements of the ice were terrifying, for none of us had any exact knowledge about how the ice usually acts up here. Nevertheless I expressed my belief that it was the veering of the wind that had caused this channel and that it would soon be filled again. Should we be forced to leave our camp, we were particularly afraid that we might not be able to recue our heavy radio apparatus. Six men, even though

one was lame, would not be too hard to move, to be sure, but as I have said, it was the delicate *matériel* that worried us.

At 8 a large piece of the northern part of the field broke away and, since our camp now lay very near the "new shore," guard duty was begun even during the day. Previously we had each stood a relatively long watch, during which we were not expected to stay out the whole time but only to go out now and then to study the situation.

We did not actually anticipate any real danger from the canals themselves, but we feared that our field would be ruined.

During my watch in the middle of the day, as the fog lifted slightly, I descried Foyn as well as Cape Leigh Smith. I concluded that there was open water along the coast because of the blue-grey reflections on the low clouds, exactly as Captain Schjelderup on the *Quest* had taught us, when we encountered ice for the first time on our way up toward Spitzbergen. I now conceived the possibility of a seaplane landing in our vicinity and so reported this observation to Captain Tornberg.

During the afternoon the wind rose continually higher until by evening I was able to record: half storm. The barometer had dropped all the way down to 28.7, having fallen all of .59 inches since morning. Both Cecioni and Trojani kept careful records of our weather observations. A thermometer hung under the Fokker wing, and observations were made every other hour.

Toward night we could see Foyn and Broch Islands with the naked eye and even new details of the coast. I estimated that we were nine miles from Foyn Island.

That evening, as we listened to the Rome radio, we heard a statement from the leader of the Russian ice-breaker expedition, Professor Simoilovich. He reported that the *Krassin*, in spite of the difficulities, could force its way through the ice and not only pick us up, but also penetrate farther east to find the balloon group if possible.

The 4th of July arrived with full storm and a heavy snowfall; alternately it froze and thawed. During my entire four-hour

watch there was terrific weather, and I shivered all the time although I ran about now and then and exercised my arms.

The barometer stood at 28.66 practically the whole day. The wind roared and pulled at our poor little tent, and the man on watch had to keep guard practically all the time over the stays of the tent and the radio masts so that they would not be blown down.

Inside the tent it was incredibly wet. We tried laying one new rag above the other to get something drier under us. Behounek, who had his place nearest the tent entrance, had the coldest and worst position. For it was not always possible to close the tent opening entirely, and rain and snow blew in as we went in and out. It was his habit never to wear any headgear unless there was very heavy snow. When the rest of us were in the tent, we always wore something on our heads, and I also suggested to the professor that he should use a black sheepskin cap that I had had with me in the Fokker plane.

This was surely one of my worst days. Often I asked myself how all this would really end. Would we ever be rescued from this dreary suffering, with insanity or death staring us in the face? By this time it was only the thought of the *Krassin* that kept us going, but the awful weather made our hopes very slight.

The heavy snowfall continued on as late as noon when it cleared a bit, and to our great surprise we found that we were near the coast. Even Foyn Island was not very far distant. We had pushed farther west than we had ever been before.

The sight of *terra firma* again aroused a lively discussion as to whether or not we ought to make for land. I told Behounek that I was considering making my way alone to Cape Leigh Smith. I certainly felt well and husky and perhaps had had better athletic training at home in Sweden than the others as a preparation for the journey. But the ever undependable drift ice and the fact that the ice was now breaking up would certainly have prevented me from ever reaching land.

From the *Città di Milano* we received the news that the Swedish

sport airplane had now arrived and that Captain Tornberg wished a report regarding the landing possibilities.

Biagi, who had fallen ill with a fever the day before, now lay in a stupor-like sleep inside the tent. With effort he succeeded occasionally during the day in making his way outside to the radio apparatus. During the time that Biagi had been in good health he had lain, as I have said, in a sleeping-bag on the Fokker wing. But now that he lay in the tent, there was one place less inside, and so Viglieri, Trojani, Behounek, and I, when we came in after our turns at guard duty, had to lie down in the space just left by the one who had gone out on guard.

The storm continued the whole day, and with incredible speed we approached Cape Leigh Smith and Great Island. Toward evening we could clearly see details of the glaciers and the shores, while Foyn and Broch crept lower and lower below the horizon. Once again the nearness of land improved the general state of mind among us, and we thought it possible that, if the storm continued another day, our ice floe might come to a stop very near land. I made certain careful observations of the direction in which we were going, and toward evening I found that our course was more and more toward Great Island rather than toward Cape Leigh Smith. Better, then, to tramp the ground of Great Island than to drift around this way on a thin ice floe at the mercy of wind and wave.

During my watch between 10 and 2 on the night before the 5th, I investigated the possibility of patching up our field so that a plane as light as the Moth might land near us. It was some degrees above freezing and I managed to fill the large water holes with masses of snow and then stamp them down. Only an hour later they had frozen solid again. But there were many such water holes on the field, and it would take several hours to prepare one single decent landing line. There seemed to be no sense, I decided, in beginning with this until we knew with certainty that the Moth plane was to arrive. For if thaw should set in quickly, then the additional snow would only add more water.

On this day we several times discussed whether or not, in the favourable weather now prevailing, we ought not to start our march toward Great Island, but since Viglieri absolutely refused to go with us and not even my chief supporter for the plan, Professor Behounek, knew his own mind, I at last said that if no planes had arrived by the next day, I would undertake the march alone. Viglieri promised me my share of the provisions; arms, skis, and other equipment I already had.

Before I set out, I intended to send a telegram to Captain Tornberg, in which I would ask to have provisions and tent equipment dropped on Great Island.

We received word that the *Krassin* had been driven back to the west although the ship was headed at full steam to the east. We understood this fully in view of the enormous distance our ice floe had moved on this day alone, but with the wind in its present direction, west-northwest, the *Krassin* ought to be aided considerably in its eastwardly course.

The barometer rose very quickly on this day, and conditions were better in the tent since the air was no longer so moist. I took out the soaking rags I had been lying on and hung them on the Fokker to dry. Likewise I removed my damp aviation togs, which I had worn constantly since Midsummer Day, and hung them up to dry and get aired on the Fokker. Even the tarpaulin, which Behounek and I had used as covering, had gradually become drenched, and this, too, I hung out.

The Abdulla cigarettes, dropped by the Swedes, which during the past few days had been rationed, came to an end on this day. We now had to resort to the Italian cigarettes, Eja, some of which had landed on the ice and were therefore dry. But they had been so shaken up by the violent blow that they were almost impossible to smoke. For myself, who had a pipe, it was still possible to use them, and from my comrades I got a number of half-emptied cigarettes in return for some relatively well preserved ones that I still had in my possession.

At 5 in the morning we were very near Cape Leigh Smith

GENERAL DRYING-OUT DAY

The author's flying clothes and the tarpaulin which he shared with Behounek as a blanket are hanging on the wings. To the extreme right, the radio transmitter

and Great Island. I estimated the distance to either place to be at most one Swedish or six English miles. The wind was still very strong, but, as Cape Leigh and Great Island clearly had blocked the movements of the ice, we did not advance further with the wind. Repeatedly I made observations by taking bearings and thus could make sure of this.

At 11 in the morning came the message from Captain Tornberg that the fog still lay very heavy over Hinlopen Strait and therefore the planes could not start. And since no Italian planes were heard or sighted during the day, our spent nerves, the uniformity of food, the hopelessness of the surroundings, our weariness and discouragement, claimed their own, so that the discussion that ensued was not carried on in the usual friendly tone, but ended in a hot quarrel.

I considered it our duty to ourselves to try to do something for our rescue and not only sit with crossed arms and watch others risk their lives coming to fetch us.

Behounek thought that it was the duty of Viglieri, as commander of the camp, to organize a march toward land and not merely declare, as he was now doing, that anyone who wished might leave.

Viglieri in his turn considered the professor's statement exceedingly unmilitary, and Behounek lost no time in stating that this was not the place to make any reference to military customs and forms—we six men were fighting for our lives far up in the north!

Biagi, who continued to lie ill with a fever in the tent, tried to make fun of me and my views regarding the landing possibilities, they being contrary to his own. I heard him say repeatedly in English to Trojani, imitating me: "Very good, very bad, very good, very bad," whereby he attempted to create the impression that I myself did not know whether the field would do or not.

What I entered in my diary about this terrifying situation is typical of the mood that prevailed among us: "Hard words are exchanged, especially between Viglieri and Behounek. Biagi brazenly sputters something about me and the field, and altogether it looks

like the beginning of the most ghastly thing that could happen—abusiveness and dissension."

To end matters, at least for myself, I took off some of my rags, still far from dry, and went into the tent; and there I soon fell asleep. Before I actually lost consciousness I heard more hard words exchanged on the Fokker wings where the others continued to sit.

THE LONG-AWAITED MOTH PLANE
The rescuer's rescuer arrives

CHAPTER VIII

The Swedes Arrive

AT 4 in the afternoon of the 5th of July, I was awakened by Biagi, who shook me vigorously.

"A plane is coming!"

I scarcely believed my eyes, but in a few seconds, when I came out of the tent, I saw a black point moving over the glaciers of North East Land in the direction of Great Island.

"If he will only find us!"

"Shall I fire the smoke signal cartridge?" asked Viglieri.

"No, no, save it; the smoke can't be seen from so far away!"

At first we believed that it was the Savoia plane. I thought I recognized the sound of the motor.

But a little later I was quite satisfied that it was a Jupiter motor that was thundering over our heads. Then I knew that it must be a Swedish plane, for up here only the Hansas carried that type. My heart stood still.

With intense excitement we followed the flight of the Hansa. Now it had already got beyond Cape Leigh Smith.

"But what can he be thinking about? They surely must know that we are not so far to the south."

As the plane came just about midway between the Cape and Great Island, it made an abrupt turn of 90 degrees to the left and came straight toward us.

"Shall we light it now?" said Viglieri.

"Wait a little longer."

I knew from my own flights that the smoke always had almost disappeared by the time I reached the field, and therefore I now considered it best to wait, especially since the plane was coming in an almost straight line toward us.

"Now you can light it!"

A heavy, dark pillar of smoke rose from the ice. Instantly the Hansa, which during the last few miles had gone a little too far to the east, headed directly for us.

We were discovered!

Only a minute later No. 255 passed at full speed very low over our heads, and I clearly saw Jacobsson as well as Rosensvärd waving to me.

After a very long swing to the left the plane steered at a low altitude toward the long side of the field, and when it was exactly over the field we saw a packet leave the plane. Immediately afterwards the red parachute spread out, and after a few seconds more the packet landed safely among us.

Three times Jacobsson repeated the manœuvre, and three more packets reached us. There was precision, indeed, in Rosensvärd's aim.

Even before the last packet had been thrown out, I had strapped on my skis and set out for the field to fetch what had been sent us. But as the Hansa, after having fulfilled its duties and after some final greetings waved to me by my Swedish comrades, began to turn to the southeast toward Great Island, I was again overcome by melancholy feelings. Something clutched at my throat, and the tears came to my eyes—it was so tragic to see the plane disappear again. For even if we had received many valuable things, still we were left on the ice. The Hansa, on the other hand, would surely be back within an hour or so at the Swedish base.

Later I learned that the Hansa had orders to proceed to the west after visiting us in order to try to find some traces of the balloon group. But of them nothing was to be seen.

We brought the packets to the Fokker, and I speculated a bit on why I had not received my rucksack, my sleeping bag, and other things that would be useful here; only provisions.

"Think of it—no cigarettes!" said someone.

"But at least we got a bottle of whisky!" I added.

For a long time we could follow the Hansa. Once it was hidden by some high ice formations south of Cape Leigh Smith. But immediately it rose up again and set out in earnest toward the west.

So we were alone once more.

Scarcely an hour had passed before someone reported that a new plane was seen coming straight from the south toward our camp. Again Viglieri wanted to fire the smoke cartridge too early, but I succeeded in making him wait. Nearer and nearer came the plane, and soon I could tell my comrades that it was the Swedish three-motor Junker plane, *Uppland*, that was arriving.

"But why are there no Italian planes?" asked someone.

"Yes, why not!"

Four times the *Uppland* passed over the field at a low altitude with the middle motor idle and dropped a packet with a parachute each time. And to my great joy I discovered that the last packet was my longed-for rucksack.

At last! Now for a feast!

THE MOTH AND THE KLEMM-DAIMLER
Two land planes equipped with skis for arctic rescue work

I saw how Lieutenant Karlsson leaned out of the door of the cabin to signal something to me, while Sergeant Nilsson manœuvred the large heavy plane in a masterly way so that Karlsson could see the camp all the while and be seen from it himself.

And now after fifteen years I was able to make use of something that I had learned during my Boy Scout days in Uppsala, namely, the semaphore. For, as it happens, in the army we have given up semaphoring in favour of the Morse code for which we employ both flags and pennants. During my schoolboy years in Uppsala I had been actively interested in the Boy Scout movement, and together with some comrades had acquired a good deal of skill in signalling with flags. And what one learns as a boy always remains. Therefore, in spite of the fact that I had not practised for fifteen years—I must admit this even if it sounds like boasting—I was able to send Karlsson the following information quite rapidly.

"It is possible to land here.

"It is possible to land here.

"It is possible to land here."

And since each time I got the return signal from Karlsson—"Understood"—I was rather elated when I could tell Viglieri that I had conversed a little with the navigator on the Swedish plane and had informed him that it would be quite possible to make a landing.

The rucksack had landed as accurately as anyone could desire. It lay only two or three yards from the Fokker. I hurried to it. At the expense of sounding like a toper, I must admit that the first object I looked for was my brandy flask, out of which I took a good shot. Then I handed it on to the other men, who did not hesitate to take their share.

And then I found chocolate and more chocolate, apples, underwear, my Primus stove, my tent, etc. And at the bottom I found a packet of newspapers, a letter from my wife, and a picture postcard from my good friend Lieutenant Söderberg in the Flying School at Ljungbyhed. This card had come by air to Spitzbergen

and now by the *Uppland* out to the ice floe, where it had been thrown down to me with the aid of a parachute.

With enormous headlines the newspapers related the story of the rescue of Nobile and told how, on my second attempt at a landing on the ice, I had turned a somersault with my Fokker and been stranded. I translated everything for Behounek and Viglieri. Both became very interested, as they saw my name under the headlines —the only word they understood!

The address on a letter from my brother-in-law and sister-in-law informed me that I had been made a captain.

But the thing that made us all rejoice the most was the news written on a paper among the contents of my rucksack:

WE SHALL TRY TO COME WITH THE MOTH TONIGHT. SCHYBERG WILL FLY IT.

GREETINGS. *Karlsson.*

After I had read this over and over again in the greatest joy, I took out my mouth organ which I also had found in the rucksack, and before an attentive audience I rendered my stock "hit," *Gubben Noak*—Old Man Noah—arranged for a wide mouth. Nor did it take long before I opened one of the three tobacco jars that I found in the rucksack, filled my pipe, and took several deep puffs.

In addition to pemmican and batteries, we also found in the packets my fine sleeping bag and still another bottle of brandy. The sleeping bag was filled with stockings, shirts and underclothes. I made a distribution of what I had received.

Afterwards I learned that on this day the *Uppland* had made a record flight: before its arrival at the camp it had flown around North East Land with instructions to look for Amundsen's plane, but had found nothing. And on board was the now completely air-minded Captain Schjelderup.

To ensure a successful landing, we now decided that toward evening we should begin to improve the field in the manner that I had attempted during the night and found practical. We fortified

ourselves for the impending task. Trojani made some rich chocolate, which contained so much of our pulverized milk that Trojani considered, quite rightly, that it was chocolate cream we were now drinking.

At 9 we began to work, but since the weather was mild I was in constant anxiety as to how Schyberg would succeed with his landing. We decided to prepare a trustworthy, though narrow, landing line, which would be marked partly with the familiar red T-shaped landing sign and partly with four ski staves to which we attached red flags.

Now I realize in retrospect that it was none too easy for Viglieri, Behounek, or Trojani to assist in the heavy work of shovelling snow. For to the degree that I was convinced that Schyberg would come, to the same degree they doubted that anyone would risk a perilous landing for our sakes.

It was midnight when we had finished our work. Trojani, who in spite of his great weakness had worked as well as he could, almost sank in a heap from fatigue when he handed me the snow shovel.

"I can't stand work like this again!"

When I was fully convinced that Schyberg intended to fetch me first—my comrades said that was what they wished—I began to prepare a little for the home journey. I cried and laughed in turn. Already in my mind I saw the table set on the *Quest*—my luxurious cabin, flowers and greenery, and my wife waiting with open arms to welcome me back to life.

Up to one o'clock at night no plane had come. Was this then only a promise like so many of the others? Were our hopes to be mocked this time, too, and in spite of everything were we to remain here?

To the others I expressed the hope that after my own rescue I would have an opportunity to return with the Moth plane. It would not take many hours, I insisted, before we would all be on board the *Quest*, and from there it would be an easy matter to get to the *Città di Milano*.

We sat out on the Fokker wing and talked. Even Cecioni had

THE HYDROPLANES AT HINLOPEN STRAIT
From left to right: No. 257, No. 255, the *Turku*, and the *Uppland*

been out the whole day and night, as the weather had been favourable. It looked as though the Moth would not arrive and I planned to take a good swig of brandy and go into the tent again to sleep away all the misery of waiting and disappointment. Just then someone shouted:

"Look over there! Two planes are coming!"

And to be sure we could clearly observe one plane considerably smaller than the other and both at a great height steering toward us.

"You are lucky, Captain, to be able to return to other human beings!" said Behounek.

"Promise me that if you cannot rescue us, you will at least drop some cigarettes to us, for that is what we need the most," said Viglieri. "I can't understand where our own Italian planes are keeping themselves."

With horror we saw that both planes were steering much too far to the south. We almost thought that they were making for Great Island. As usual Viglieri in his eagerness was ready to fire the smoke cartridge too early. But this time, too, I succeeded in stopping him.

Now the planes were directly to the east of us. The Hansa circled constantly and the little Moth followed at a considerably greater height.

But suddenly the Hansa must have caught sight of the camp, for at a very low height it now came straight toward us. And then Viglieri fired the smoke cartridge, and in only a few seconds Jacobsson, with No. 257, made an abrupt zoom. Schyberg, too, was now coming at full speed, forcing the little Moth to its limit.

The smoke blew toward the part of the field where the actual landing was to be made. "I hope he sees the radio antennæ!" I thought, as I saw Schyberg steer straight toward the smoke, apparently to make a direct landing.

I had expected that Schyberg would land the plane right beside the red landing mark, for our prepared stretch was best at the beginning, but instead the plane took the ground ten or twelve yards out on the field. I saw that there was splashing and spluttering

JUST BEFORE THE MOTH PLANE ARRIVED
Behounek, Trojani, Viglieri, and Cecioni with his broken leg

around the skis. "If he will only keep from driving up against that nasty ice ridge!" I thought. That was just where the Moth was headed—but it stopped where the ice ridge began. The substratum was a little firmer there than on the other parts of the field.

I ran out to meet my comrade. In a telegram sent some days before, I had asked the fliers who eventually intended to land with us not to taxi their planes over our floe until I had had time to show them the best way. Accordingly Schyberg remained very still with his plane at the point where it had stopped.

When I came out to him, the first thing I said was:

"You must taxi carefully here, for the field is downright bad."

I thought it was best to explain from the first what the conditions were, and I believed that in such everyday words I would be able to keep Schyberg as calm as possible, for that certainly was needed on our terrible flying field.

So it was I who helped him, on his second visit to the ice floe, to swing the plane toward the same spot where two weeks before we had started together with our Fokker.

The first words Schyberg spoke were:

"I have orders from Captain Tornberg that you are to come first, and, to make sure, I have it in writing."

"Yes, I will come at once."

"Hurry! There is no time to lose!"

"May I take my rucksack along?"

"No, you cannot. It is much too heavy, as you know very well. Who knows if we will be able to rise from this field."

"May I take my camera along?"

"Yes. But hurry!"

My comrades had gathered around the plane and now were speaking to Schyberg. I hurried back to the tent and put on my flying costume, my aviation cap, goggles, etc., found my camera and some films already exposed, put some pieces of chocolate and a tobacco tin into my roomy pockets and ran out to the plane.

Although I had laid out my map case containing my diary on

the Fokker wing in order not to forget it, I did so none the less in my great haste.

I now said farewell to the other men, shook hands with them one by one and again expressed my confidence that we soon would meet.

We took our places in the plane. Schyberg asked me if I thought that we would lift properly and I answered a decided yes—just as he had done when we both had started with Nobile on board.

The little Cirrus motor began to crackle, the plane glided on the skis faster and faster. At first the slush splashed up even onto the wings, but soon we had lifted.

I breathed deeply. My comrade had saved me, and I did not need to await the *Krassin*. The verse about "glass and death" had not come true this time.

Some hundred yards from our field I observed two other ice floes equally large, and I decided to inform the marooned men about them as soon as possible if all were not rescued that night.

Now Schyberg turned completely around, and as we rose slowly our course went straight to the west. Jacobsson and Rosensvärd came very near to us and waved eagerly. And now came the chief and Christell in No. 255, and from that too I could see waving. So it was a handsome escort that the chief and our men gave me on my journey back from the pack ice.

After about fifteen minutes of flying, Schyberg landed magnificently on a large firm ice ledge south of Esmark Island. During my stay on the pack ice I apparently had got some sort of hydrophobia, judging by my repeated advice to Schyberg to take care because of the quantity of water on the ice.

Some few minutes before us Jacobsson had landed in a large lane east of Schyberg's landing place, and on the pontoons he now drove his Hansa up on the ice ledge. Jacobsson and Rosensvärd came toward me and gave me a hearty welcome back again.

The chief continued to stay in the air with his Hansa, for from the beginning it was intended that Schyberg should start back immediately to fetch the next man. But Schyberg felt tired—he had

not slept a wink for twenty-four hours—and he did not want to risk a failure on his second landing. And furthermore the lane in which the Hansa had landed was beginning to fill with large, loose ice chunks. We therefore signalled to the chief with a request for him to land. And in a few minutes, when Captain Tornberg was down among the others, he also agreed, after we had told our reasons, that the rescue flights were not to continue, but that all three planes were to proceed as soon as possible back to Hinlopen Strait.

Since the Moth plane needed a supply of gasolene in order to get home, I took Lieutenant Christell's place in the chief's Hansa in order to get back a little sooner.

When the chief and I were well up in the air and safely on our way to the west, I got a severe nervous attack. We often say that we can cry from joy, but it was certainly not alone from joy that I wept copiously for the two hours it took to get back. We flew against a strong wind. During this flight I understood the feelings of the man I had brought back from the grip of the pack ice nearly two weeks before.

The regions we were now flying over were for me quite familiar. And the same radiant sunshine prevailed. The solid ice in the fjords and parts beyond still remained. But the pack ice had broken up considerably. In many places were wide channels.

I saw a dark point on the horizon to the north.

Could this possibly be the *Krassin*?

Christell had left his field-glasses in the navigation seat, and by using them I could clearly see the hull of a ship and two smokestacks out of which belched thick pillars of smoke.

On the arrival at Hinlopen Strait I found that the Swedish base had been moved from Russian Island some miles to the southeast. All the islands in Murchison Bay that only two weeks ago had been joined by solid ice now lay bare and no longer connected.

After the chief had landed and had taxied toward the *Quest*, a lifeboat was rowed out to fetch me. And when the boat tied up at the rope ladder of the *Quest*, Captain Schjelderup and his crew met me with a ninefold Norwegian hurrah.

CAPTAIN LUNDBORG BACK ON THE QUEST

"The pack ice is certainly no joke," I said to Schjelderup.

"No, I'll grant you that, Captain."

"You are all well, I hope."

"Oh yes, but it's not been the same as usual, for we knew, Captain, that you were suffering out there and that you might not be saved."

Doctor Huss also came to meet me and patted me on the back, and the good steward Haeggelund scarcely had time to express his welcome to me on board again before he asked me what I wanted to eat.

"I must have a word to say about that," broke in Dr. Huss.

"Oh, but surely a cup of coffee won't do any harm," I protested.

"Oh, no, you may have coffee and bread but afterwards you must go and lie down," ordered the doctor.

And while Haeggelund prepared the coffee, I told of my misfortunes on the ice, about my stay on the ice floe, about the arrival of the planes and my rescue. I sent a telegram to my wife reading:

BIRGER FETCHED ME WITH THE MOTH. AM NOW ON BOARD THE QUEST. HEARTIEST GREETINGS.

Einar.

I also sent a telegram to Viglieri, in which I told about my rescue and the reason why we had not continued our flights to the camp.

After eating, when I went into my cabin again and washed with soap and warm water and put on clean pyjamas and crept down into my berth, the past two weeks were like an ugly dream.

I expressed to the chief a desire to visit, as soon as possible, the *Città di Milano*, which was still lying in Virgo Harbour, to meet Nobile. And he decided that after I had slept a couple of hours, we should proceed; Aviation Chief Lihr gladly placed the Finnish Junker plane *Turku* at our disposal.

It was not easy to sleep. I got sleeping potions from the doctor, but they only made me feel ill. After I had lain in bed two hours, I arose, ordered hot water from Haeggelund—and shaved myself. For I had a beard that was a beard.

THE DAY AFTER THE RESCUE

Captain Lundborg and his rescuer, Lieutenant Schyberg, standing in front of the Moth plane

An hour or so after my arrival on the *Quest*, Jacobsson and Rosensvärd landed. They reported that Schyberg had disappeared about thirty miles before they themselves had come to Hinlopen Strait. Since the Hansa, however, had so little gasolene, they were unable to find out more accurately where Schyberg had gone. The ice was solid, however, on all the firths, and it was likely that Schyberg had been forced to land on Brandy Bay. This later proved to be the case. Colour Sergeant Svensson was sent out with Lieutenant Rosensvärd as navigator to drop gasolene to Schyberg. It had been poured into a rubber boat of the same type as the one the Swedes had thrown down to the Nobile group.

At 12:30 noon as the chief and I stood ready to fly with the *Turku* to the *Città di Milano*, Schyberg and Christell landed. Schyberg, who had perfomed a great piece of work during the past twenty-four hours, immediately went to bed. And this privilege he had surely earned.

THE HANSAS CUT OFF BY THE ICE
The *Quest* had to tow away the floe to release them

CHAPTER IX

An Eventful Week

I CANNOT say that I had anticipated any great celebration when I came on board the *Città di Milano*, but still I had supposed that I would be received with greater friendliness than proved to be the case. Without even a word of thanks or an expression of joy because I had been rescued from the pack ice, the captain of the ship, Commander Romagna, greeted me with the question:

"Why, after all, did you take Nobile off first?"

"Because I believed that he was the most exhausted of them all out there and, besides, that he could give the rescue expeditions invaluable information."

"Oh, well, here he's only causing trouble."

I was thunderstruck. Did the acknowledged head of the *Città di Milano* speak of General Nobile in this way? Had the General's misfortune momentarily so changed respect and honour to contempt and slander?

We went in to General Nobile. He still lay in his berth and seemed very exhausted. The meeting between him and myself was especially friendly. The otherwise sorrowful face of the General brightened considerably, and stretching out both his hands, he said several times to me:

"I am very glad to see you safely here, Captain Lundborg."

I told him about the events of the past few days, about our varying moods and about how we had suffered from not seeing any planes above our ice floe. I considered it of the greatest importance for the morale that a plane should appear often over the field and also drop something, even if a landing could not be made.

Captain Tornberg said that there had been a heavy drain on the provisions on board the *Quest* and the *Tanja*, but that if the General would place articles at our disposal, the Swedish planes would drop them down at the first opportunity. The men out there needed especially cigarettes and whisky. If also one could add some variety to the food, so much the better.

The General rang for his attendant and called in many different subordinates, enumerating several things, and told the chief that everything would be made ready so that we could take the articles with us on board the *Turku*.

General Nobile was quite depressed, not the least because of all the adverse criticism that had been directed against him and his *Italia* venture from practically the whole world. The attitude of his countrymen on board the *Città di Milano* was also not likely to improve his already impaired health.

Whether or not General Nobile carried out his *Italia* expedition scientifically is a matter that I cannot decide. But I know that he is a fine and noble man, and I am convinced that all the severe judgments passed on him and certain details of his polar expedition

THE FINNISH HYDROPLANE, THE TURKU

Showing the crew of the machine which rescued Captain Sora from Foyn Island.

THE RADIO OPERATOR, IVERSEN, TESTS A RUBBER BOAT
This is of the same type as those thrown to Nobile on the ice floe

would never have been uttered if catastrophe had not befallen it. And to criticize the General because I took him off the floe first, I consider inhuman and cruel. I believe that General Nobile now has a clear idea that so-called public opinion is like the stock market, which now stands high, now low, depending on a number of external conditions that cannot be determined beforehand.

After about an hour's stay on board, we returned to the *Quest* and when I had partaken of the common dinner, I went to bed early.

It had been the original intention to start an expedition out to the camp this very night in order to bring the men new provisions, but since the fog closed in again the proposed flight did not materialize.

During the first hours I slept heavily. But the memories of the past days on the ice made my sleep very uneasy. Several times during the night I rushed up and out of my cabin to my comrades, who sat up a long time in the gun room. When I appeared among

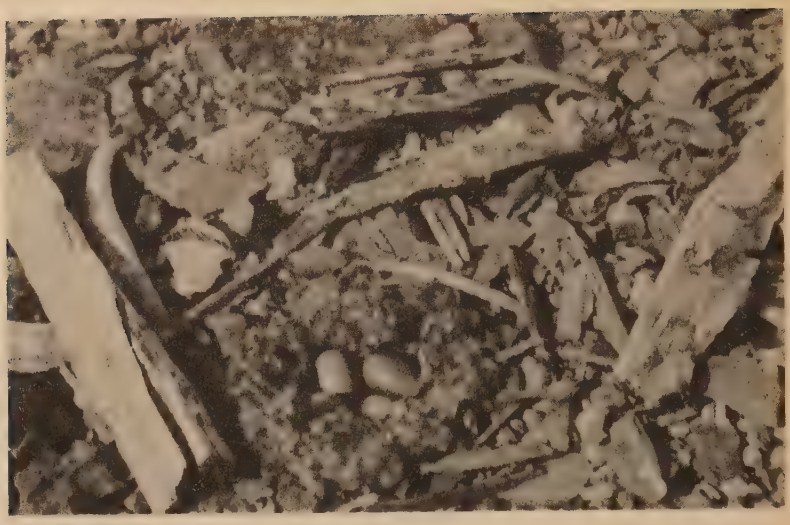
CAPTAIN LUNDBORG GOES HUNTING
A little diversion after the return from the ice

them with a terrified look on my face, they wanted to know what was wrong.

At 3 o'clock in the morning the radio operator, Iversen, came in to me. He brought a whole pack of telegrams—signs of life from the great outside world. Although I was still tired and spent, I ran through the telegrams. When I read them I understood that my rescue was not only a happy dream—it was reality.

There was a telegram from the King of Norway with congratulations on my return, a telegram from my wife with greetings to Schyberg and myself, telegrams with offers from a number of newspapers the world over, and besides a mass of telegrams of heartiest congratulation from persons known and unknown.

The next day passed calmly and quietly, and in every way I tried to avoid letting my thoughts return to the stranded ones out on the pack ice. To distract my mind I took part, for one thing, in a hunting expedition led by Captain Schjelderup during which we shot a number of eiders and auks.



THE NEST OF AN EIDER DUCK
The bits of wood have drifted to Spitzbergen from Siberia

During the day and the coming night Schyberg and I received another heap of telegrams, among them one from the Aviation General and our own chief at Malmslätt.

On the 8th of July a Swedish journalist, Stubbendorff, sent by the *Stockholms-Tidningen*, arrived at our base from Kings Bay on board the motor boat *Svalbard*, which belonged to the manager at New Aalesund. According to orders already issued by the proper Swedish military authorities, the members of the expedition were forbidden to establish any connexions with newspapers through the radio of the *Quest*. So there ought to have been a great deal for Stubbendorff to do. He was quite proud of the journalistic feat he had accomplished, and it was his intention to write a book about his Spitzbergen trip, which he in fact did, calling it *Polar Sea Reporting*.

He subjected us all to more or less exhaustive interviews, and he asked me to write an account of my experiences on the pack ice for his newspaper. Like all my comrades, I had naturally kept a diary during the whole expedition—even during my stay on the ice—but

THE FIRST PRESS CONTACTS
A photographer and two journalists from Stockholm appear

I had not really considered publishing it as early as this. Stubbendorff, however, persuaded me and I immediately started and gave the news-hungry writer one article per day during the next four days.

The following day the weather was very bad with heavy storm and dense fog. It was therefore no wonder that no radio connexion could be established with the Viglieri group, as the camp out on the pack ice was designated from now on.

For several reasons Commander Romagna on the *Città di Milano* had decided to let the ship go back to Kings Bay. Moreover, the large Italian seaplanes had to change motors, since the pilots had requested this as a condition for continuing their exploration flights over the pack ice. Virgo Harbour with its high surrounding cliffs had certainly proved unsuitable so far as the radio was concerned. Besides, the ship needed to take on provisions, and I do believe that, for obvious reasons, all on board longed for Italy again. And Kings Bay, after all, lay in that direction.

On this day the radio brought us a telegram from King Gustaf,

THE FINNISH HYDROPLANE TURKU CAUGHT IN THE ICE

in which the King expressed his joy and his gratitude for what the Swedes had been able to accomplish on Spitzbergen. The telegram was posted in the gun room together with the one already received from the Queen.

At 2 on the night before the 10th of July, the *Braganza*, under charter to the Italian government, arrived. The ship was to proceed as far east as possible north of North East Land. Commander Romagna had sent a letter to the chief, and this letter caused very extensive discussions among us Swedes. Romagna wanted his fliers to borrow our sport machines in order to accomplish something too. But meanwhile we heard through an Italian doctor, who was on board the *Braganza*, that the Italian fliers were not eager to fly the sport airplanes mentioned in Romagna's letter. So far as the Moth plane was concerned, their objection surprised me, especially since the Moth is generally recognized to be a very easily managed plane.

With the *Braganza* went also the Swedish captain, Pallin, a photographer named Borg-Mesch from Kiruna, and the latter's son.

CAPTAIN SORA RELATES HIS ADVENTURES
Along the railing [from left to right] are Lieutenant Karlsson, Dr. Huss, Knut Stubbendorff, and Lieutenant Ekman

Together they were to undertake a sledge expedition as relief work. Since it was crowded on board, berths could not be provided for the Pallin expedition, so the members had to lie in their sleeping bags on the bridge.

Later in the day we got a message from the *Città di Milano* that the *Krassin* had been driven back by the very heavy pack ice. For me especially this news was very depressing. So long as the fog lasted we ourselves could do nothing with our planes, and no one could tell how long the field would be usable.

The following day the drift ice suddenly closed in on the seaplanes, which had been moored along the ice ridge where there had been open water until now. Both the wind and the current caused our base to become totally ice-blocked within but a few minutes. Therefore we were obliged to use the *Quest* for towing the large ice floes so that we could get the seaplanes out into open water. As a direct result of this situation, the *Quest* was moved that evening a

THE KLEMM-DAIMLER AND ITS PILOT, LIEUTENANT EKMAN

This machine was never used in rescue work, but made two fine flights from Kings Bay to Hinlopen Strait and back

A BONFIRE OF SIBERIAN DRIFTWOOD

few miles north to a better location. During this removal the *Quest*, however, went aground, and it took several hours before Captain Schjelderup succeeded in getting the ship off the shoal.

A large number of gasolene barrels had to be put ashore on a nearby island, and as these were to be transported to Hansa Bay—so the chief had christened the new base—this involved no little work.

On the 11th of July, just as I was seated in my cabin writing my newspaper articles, I heard yells of joy from the gun room. I hurried there and found that from the *Tanja*, which still lay in Virgo Harbour, had come the news that Malmgren had been saved.

Finn Malmgren saved! If only we might see him soon on board the *Quest*—that was what we all wished most sincerely.

The *Tanja* also told us that the *Krassin*, its fliers having discovered the Malmgren group, had gone to get the men. Later, however, came another telegram which said that the flier of the *Krassin*, Tyuchnovsky, had been forced to land in the neighbourhood of Cape Platen and had there wrecked his plane.

My head began to whirl.

CAPTAIN SORA

Was it the intention of Providence that every rescue was to be accompanied by a new disaster for someone in the various relief expeditions?

Would the rescue work up here become a *perpetuum mobile*, in which new lives were constantly to be sacrificed in saving those who earlier had met disaster?

The following day I flew the Moth plane from our former base to Hansa Bay. It was a very thrilling start since altogether I had only 35 paces on a very ragged ice ridge at my disposal. But I did what the Swedish pioneer aviator, Calle Cederström, once had to do —one man held on to each wing while the motor went at full speed; then, on a nod from me, both let go.

Our joy that Malmgren had been saved was turned during the day into unbounded grief. For the chief received a telegram of condolence on the death of Malmgren. Some weeks before, he had been left in a dying condition by his two comrades, Zappi and Mariano, who now alone had been saved, the latter very exhausted.

At 8:30 P. M. came a telegram, which may well be considered as

VAN DONGEN

the biggest sensation during the whole Spitzbergen expedition. It was a telegram in Swedish from the *Krassin*, signed by Commander Oras, the former military attaché in Stockholm.

"Is Oras on board the *Krassin*?" someone asked.

"And a fine man he seems to be, too, judging by the excellent navigation," said another.

The messages from Oras on this day as well as later were the most reliable and the best we had had concerning the general situation during the whole Spitzbergen expedition.

In the telegram from Oras it was stated that, since the *Krassin* now had taken Zappi and Mariano on board and seen the Sora group on Foyn Island, the ice-breaker would proceed down to the Viglieri group to take them, too, on board. Afterwards the *Krassin* intended to rescue its own flier and his plane at Cape Platen.

The weather this evening was fine, and the chief therefore decided to use the Finnish *Turku* and the two Hansa planes to make an attempt to reach the Viglieri group. To be sure there were many on board the *Quest* who thought that the chief might have desisted

CAPTAIN SORA IN UNIFORM, AFTER A SHAVE

from the flight, since the *Krassin* now seemed to have had better ice conditions, but, on the other hand, it would have been wonderful if the Swedes could have rescued the rest of the victims.

After the three fliers had started, Lieutenant Ekman landed with a Klemm-Daimler, which had come up to Spitzbergen a week after the Moth plane and therefore had not been made ready. Ekman never had an opportunity to take a direct part in the rescue work, but his flight entirely alone from Advent Bay across West Spitzbergen to Hansa Bay is enough to show what sort of a flier he is.

Later in the night there landed, in turn, the chief, Jacobsson, and Lihr. On board were two filthy and bearded individuals who proved to be Captain Sora and van Dongen. Now the hurrahs resounded again!

On account of the fog the seaplanes had not been able to make their way out to the Viglieri group but, as it was known that Captain Sora and his companions were on Foyn Island, the planes had made a thorough search of the island from the air, and in the end had discovered the two men on a cliff. All the planes had landed in a recently opened lane and had taken Sora and van Dongen on board; but, as the lane began to close again, they had had to leave behind the two dogs that comprised the remainder of the Sora expedition. Criticism has been directed against the chief because he did not take the dogs with him. I wish that these critics might sometime have an opportunity themselves to choose between their own lives and that of a dog; then they might better understand that the chief could act only as he did.

It was amusing to see Captain Sora lying crouched on the deckhouse roof of the *Quest*. Good-humouredly, he told about all his trials, about how they had to leave behind the Dane, Warming, who suffered from snow blindness, how they had to kill some of their dogs to support themselves, and how terrifying it had been to wander through the pack ice. Both, however, had been in excellent humour up to the very day the first Norwegian plane appeared.

ON THE HOMEWARD WAY
Lieutenants Jacobsson and Schyberg, Captain Sora, Lieutenant Rosensvärd

CHAPTER X

Home!

THE following day, July 13, can be considered the date when the first steps toward the return of the Swedish expedition were made. For it had been decided that the *Uppland* was to go back to Sweden, and the *Turku* had also received orders to come home. At 3:30 P. M. both planes set out, with Kings Bay as their nearest goal. In addition to the regular crews, there were on board Captain Sora and van Dongen, Director Sandström, and Knut Stubbendorff, the journalist. At Kings Bay the *Uppland* and the *Turku* were taken on board a Norwegian coal freighter which brought them across the Arctic Sea, and then they went by air to their respective home bases.

The same day Commander Oras sent us by telegram a quite complete account of the rescue of the Malmgren group. Many words and many severe judgments have been pronounced over the attitude of the two Italians toward our own countryman. The reason for this is not so much what actually happened, as that anti-Fascist nations wished to place the two Italian officers and the Fascists in an unfavourable light. We may say what we will about the actions of Zappi and Mariano, but I believe—and many Arctic men have supported me—that anyone finding himself in a similar predicament would have done just as the two captains did. And Zappi's equipment easily proved that Malmgren's fate might have been repeated. . . .

At this point I merely wish to say that the exaggerated criticism should have been withheld until the conditions had been made clear and those involved had been heard themselves. Even though we Swedes have been born and live in the north, accustomed to ice and cold, we cannot always understand the conditions prevailing in Spitzbergen.

On July 15, at 11 A. M., the propeller of the *Quest* made its first turn on the journey home. The previous day the Daimler had been dismounted and brought on board the *Quest* to be taken to the *Tanja* on its arrival at Kings Bay. Attended by heavy drift ice, the two Hansas, with Jacobsson and Swensson as pilots, as well as the little Moth plane, which had been equipped with pontoons, were brought out into the open water, and as early as 10:30 A. M. had started to fly to Kings Bay. The two Hansas followed the coast around West Spitzbergen, while Ekman, on the contrary, guiding the Moth, took his course directly across and as a result came to Kings Bay a half hour before the other planes.

In the evening the *Quest* dropped anchor in Mosel Bay because the weather was very stormy and foggy and the channels dangerous on account of a number of submerged rocks. We now seized the opportunity to buy some fine polar bear skins of some whalers who lived in a forlorn little cottage on Mosel Bay. More of us would have taken the opportunity, but unfortunately we did not have

THE LAST BASE AT HINLOPEN STRAIT
The Moth, the Klemm-Daimler, and the *Quest*

enough cash. And checks the whalers—quite naturally!—did not want at all.

On the 16th we proceeded in wretched weather to South Inlet on Danish Island, where we stayed overnight because of the storm. Jacobsson arrived with a Hansa early in the morning of the 17th to make it possible for Captain Tornberg to reach Kings Bay before the *Quest*. The order had come from Sweden that the Malmslätt part of the Spitzbergen expedition should be sent home, and it was for this reason that the chief had a great many things to do in Kings Bay.

At 7 in the evening the *Quest* anchored in Kings Bay, where the *Tanja* had arrived earlier. In addition to these two ships, both the *Città di Milano* and the *Hobby* were now in Kings Bay. Furthermore the French cruiser *Strasbourg* and the Norwegian armoured cruiser, *Tordenskjold*, had been there earlier. On board the *Hobby* we met Riiser-Larsen, Lützow-Holm, and Lambrecht, and, moored a short distance from the ship, lay the two Norwegian seaplanes. As I have already said, the *Hobby*, after its first trip, had again departed for Norway to continue from there to Greenland with some American tourists who had chartered the boat. In the meantime Miss Boyd, the American lady who financed the tourist expedition, had placed the ship at the disposal of the Norwegian government with the provision that she and her group might all the time remain on board. Therefore we met, besides Miss Boyd, a Mr. and Mrs. Calhoun, and the leader of the group, Mr. Gilbert, a Spanish-American who knew practically every language in the world.

The chief and I were invited by Romagna to the *Città di Milano*, but the remainder of the evening we spent with our Norwegian comrades on board the *Quest* and partly on the *Tanja*. The cordial congratulations that I had received from the Norwegian fliers made me very happy, much more so than perhaps more elegant expressions of respect from other sources.

It was a great work that the Norwegian air expedition to Spitzbergen had carried out, though perhaps not all the accounts of

AN ABANDONED WHALERS' HUT

what was accomplished were made known to the public. The Norwegians were the first to set out. In addition to their many flights over the pack ice, they organized a number of emergency relief stations on the north coast of North East Land, and it was the knowledge of these depots that reduced to a minimum the risk of flying over this wilderness.

Lieutenant Schyberg and I paid a visit to General Nobile in the evening, and his reunion with Schyberg was very cordial. The General had now recovered to such an extent that he could be up. We discussed with him the intimate details concerning Malmgren's death. As for the rumours that were current, the General said that he did not believe them at all.

The following morning at half past eight the *Krassin* arrived at Kings Bay. It was impressive to see the great ice-breaker slowly push into the fjord. I immediately set out for the *Città di Milano* to be on hand when the Viglieri group was brought on board the Italian vessel. In the General's cabin I met Miss Behounek, sister of the Czecho-Slovakian professor, my good friend of the ice. Earlier,

SCHYBERG, SERGEANT ANDERSSON, AND WEIBAHR

when the *Uppland* had left Hansa Bay, I had handed over a letter that the professor had sent her through me. She now thanked me very heartily for this letter and did not have words enough to express admiration for the great work that the *Krassin* had accomplished, by means of which her brother, too, had been saved from the ice and death.

Miss Behounek seemed to me like a kind of self-appointed manager for Nobile. She ordered and arranged things so that this or that person had an audience with him, and on an earlier visit of mine to the *Città di Milano* she had furthermore arranged to have a motion-picture reel taken of the General and myself. That little episode almost came to a bad end, for Romagna suddenly came rushing into Nobile's cabin and had a very hot discussion with him in Italian. From the whole conversation I gathered only that Romagna was reproaching Nobile because he had not asked his permission to be immortalized with me. But the motion-picture man got his film nevertheless and later I heard him tell how he had

THE KRASSIN ARRIVES AT KINGS BAY
The other survivors are on board

sent a telegram to the head office of the firm to say that he had filmed an extra fine attraction—Nobile and his rescuer.

In company with the General and—naturally—Miss Behounek, I went out to meet the men of the *Italia* brought back by the *Krassin*. The deck was black with people. The big launch drew closer and closer and finally came alongside the rope ladder of the *Città di Milano*.

A man was assisted up the rope ladder. Leaning on crutches, he made his way slowly.

"This is Cecioni—hurrah!"

Cecioni hurried toward the General, who caught him in his arms and kissed him.

The next man was Viglieri—and then all the others except Mariano, who was to be brought over later in a special boat, since he lay in bed on the *Krassin* quite ill.

I went up to Biagi and took his hand, but he did not seem to recognize me.

"Oh, Lundborg!"

PROFESSOR BEHOUNEK AND HIS SISTER ON THE CITTÀ DI MILANO

He measured me from top to toe and apparently had difficulty in identifying me.

All were neatly dressed, clean and shaved; apparently the *Krassin* in its preparations had even included clothing for the men of the *Italia* that might eventually be rescued. After the General had talked with them all for a little while, I was again permitted to come into his cabin, where Zappi also was. Since the Swedish expedition—at least the part from Malmslätt—was soon to return to Sweden, I asked Zappi after I had heard his story, how they had left Malmgren and if there was anything I could say in his behalf to Finn Malmgren's mother in Stockholm.

"I am coming myself to visit her—I consider it my duty," he answered.

At 4 in the afternoon the *Tanja* moved toward the *Krassin* to take on board my plane, which also had been salvaged by the capable Russians. When the chief had received the first telegrams in Swedish from Commander Oras, he had immediately sent a reply in which among other things he asked that my damaged Fokker

plane be taken on board the *Krassin* and that my map case, which I had forgotten on the ice and which contained my diary, be also brought along.

Originally I had not intended to go on board the *Krassin*; from the bridge of the *Tanja* I wanted to see how the Fokker was transferred to our ship. But the chief called to me and said that Professor Simoilovich wanted to meet me. I therefore boarded the *Krassin* and was introduced to the now world-famous leader of the Russian expedition.

I had met Oras and Tyuchnovsky some hours before, when they had made their visit to the gun room on the *Quest*. Oras had asked me then if I wanted to turn over to Tyuchnovsky a certain instrument designed for use among clouds and fog, since the Russian plane lacked one like it. And that I promised Oras I would do.

But when I examined my plane a little closer, or, rather, examined its equipment, I discovered that the various instruments, compasses, and other things had been removed. In Sweden it has been said that my plane was stripped—I believe, however, that if any of us Swedes had been on a similar expedition, we too would have appropriated souvenirs. Obviously this had been done without the knowledge of Oras, for otherwise he would not have needed to ask me to turn over an instrument that already had been removed.

The second officer of the ship asked me to come into his cabin for a moment.

"What can he want of me?" I wondered.

I can't deny that I thought of my war years in Finland and Esthonia. But when I had got down into his cabin, I found it was to be just an ordinary little chat. After a little while Oras, Viglieri, the chief, and some Swedes also came. Each one received two packages of genuine Soviet Russian cigarettes, and I did not quite know what to think when Commander Oras finally offered a toast in real Russian vodka in honour of a common Soviet Russian, Italian, and Swedish enterprise on Spitzbergen.

But it was not only business matters that were discussed. We also heard some well-known songs from popular Stockholm revues.

THE WRECKED FOKKER ON BOARD THE KRASSIN

It was Oras who sang them, which all the more strengthened our earlier impression that Oras had a good knowledge of things Swedish.

* * *

On the way to the *Tanja*, I saw my plane again and all my memories were revived. Once more I had a nervous attack, and Doctor Huss had to take a hand.

Early the following morning the *Tanja* departed, and at 3 in the afternoon the *Quest* left Kings Bay with a lowering of colours. Just before our departure a large German tourist steamer, *Orinoco*, had arrived in Kings Bay, and the many tourists who had landed in New Aalesund to see the now world-famous mining community, went in their boat close past the *Quest* and looked at us through their field-glasses as if the boat had been a floating menagerie.

That night we were in the midst of heavy pack ice, and after

some days of difficult travelling over the Arctic in a heavy sea, we approached the Norwegian coast on July 24.

During the trip an order had come from Sweden that the entire expedition was to come home, whereupon the chief, at an early stage in the journey, had been able to issue a radio order for the *Tanja*, which had gone to Advent Bay to entrust the Fokker plane and the two sport planes still unmounted to a Norwegian coal freighter, to depart with its whole cargo at the earliest moment for Tromsö, where both ships were to meet again.

When the Norwegian coast came into sight, and when a few hours later we were gliding over calm water in the Norwegian fjords, we rejoiced at every green spot, every bush, and every pretty cottage that we saw along the shores. And it was with a certain contempt that we lifted our eyes to the ice on the tops of the fjelds. They reminded us of all our difficulties up on Spitzbergen.

"At least I shall never return to Spitzbergen!" I said to Schjelderup.

"Just wait, Captain. In another month or perhaps a year a longing for the majestic ice will come and, like so many others who have seen the grand scenery up there, you will return, though under different circumstances, to enjoy once more everything beautiful that Spitzbergen and the polar regions have to offer."

Captain Schjelderup was right. For already now, after only a couple of months, I feel a secret desire to see again those regions which were the scene of the most wonderful experience I have had in my life.

At 11 in the evening of July 24, the *Quest* tied up alongside the Arctic quay in Tromsö. While the chief and our other men went up to the hotel to attend a welcoming banquet, I had to sit down at the telegraph station and dictate my last two articles for Stubbendorff's newspaper. These were not finished until 5 o'clock the following morning when our comrades long since had gone to sleep.

During the day we met the Italian Major Penso, who for some

CAPTAIN TORNBERG ON THE WAY HOME, RATHER PLEASED

time, with Tromsö as his base, had been looking for Amundsen's lost plane. He had at his disposal a fine Dornier-Wahl and now offered to take us to Narvik, an offer that we naturally accepted at once with pleasure.

Who of us Swedes could have foreseen during the pleasant journey with Major Penso that on his homeward flight, after a long period of hard work, he would meet his fate. During an attempt at an emergency landing in a heavy fog in Germany, the plane struck against a power line and Penso was killed.

In Narvik a large assembly met us at the quay, and the reception we received from the local residents was of the very heartiest. Our train to Stockholm did not leave until the following day, so during the night before the 26th we could enjoy a sound sleep in the handsome villa, Bromsgården, belonging to the Kiruna Mining Company.

The *Città di Milano* had arrived at Narvik on the previous day, partly to land General Nobile and the other *Italia* men, and partly to get provisions. General Nobile and his company were to take the

same train to the south through Sweden as the Swedish expedition. The *Città di Milano,* on the other hand, would soon return to Spitzbergen to continue to be the base for the Italian rescue expedition.

An episode that illustrates the coolness of the Norwegians, not alone toward General Nobile but toward everything Italian, might be mentioned. As the *Città di Milano* was about to tie up at the quay in Narvik and, as usual, the hawsers were to be thrown toward land, not one of the hundreds of spectators on the quay made an effort to catch them. The hawsers had to be rowed ashore by the crew. Some Norwegian papers criticized the fact that the vessel kept an armed guard at the landing after it was finally moored, but as far as I know this is the usual custom with warships in all harbours. And furthermore it was related that General Nobile had not intended to set foot on Norwegian soil and therefore had ordered a long gangplank laid from the vessel to the Swedish railway coach that had been booked for the Italians.

At the departure from Narvik on the evening of the 26th, the railway station was black with people, but no disturbance arose, though demonstrations against General Nobile had been feared. And in the midst of lively farewell greetings from the friendly Narvik residents and loud Norwegian ninefold hurrahs, the train left the station.

The railway coach that had been reserved for the Swedish expedition was coupled next to that of the Italians, and so during our whole journey down to Krylbo we could visit each other. Since the Italians wanted supper and the only opportunity would be at the Railway Hotel in Kiruna, I ordered the meal by telegraph.

It was with a certain tenseness that, side by side with the General, I passed through the Kiruna crowds on the way from the train to the restaurant and back. To be sure, the General was met with silence, but no hostile demonstrations whatever occurred. Just before the train left the station, a young man called for several cheers for the Swedish expedition and its members.

"Can you guess who it was that started the cheers?" asked one

"SO NEAR AND YET SO FAR"
Cartoon by W. J. Enright in the New York *World*

of my good friends in Kiruna who came forward to the train window.

"No, I really do not know."

"It was one of the fiercest Bolshevists in the community!"

During the journey down through Sweden, the expedition was met not only at the larger stations, but even at the smaller ones, with the greatest cordiality. There were hurrahs and waving of hands, and masses of flowers were given not only to the Swedes but also to General Nobile. The General was very happy and grateful for all the courtesy. I think that during his journey through the country he got a very good impression of Sweden and the Swedes.

In Krylbo our ways parted; the Italian coach was to go by the Krylbo-Mjölby route and then proceed to the south without touching Stockholm. Since the arrival at Krylbo was to be early in the morning of the 28th, the General once again expressed his desire to thank the Swedish expedition and in the meantime to say farewell to us all. We gathered in the General's compartment, where Miss Behounek with surprising skill had prepared a drink for each of us. Then we raised our glasses for a final greeting and our ways parted.

Throughout the whole journey, Nobile had been particularly interested in the Swedish newspapers, and I often had to go into his compartment and translate the most important articles. He seemed very pleased at the spirit of our papers even if a few articles were not perhaps quite satisfactory.

Just before 9 in the morning of July 28, our train pulled into Central Station at Stockholm. To be sure, we had expected to be met by our nearest relatives and our superiors, but that nearly all of Stockholm was to give us a welcome surpassed our boldest expectations. There were flowers and speeches and fourfold hurrahs, shaking of hands and much more!

After some days' stay in Stockholm, we arrived on July 31 at Linköping, where the whole city, in spite of the terrific rain, had gathered to give a welcome to the part of the Spitzbergen expedition that had set out from Malmslätt.

CAPTAIN LUNDBORG IN DRESS UNIFORM

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As early as the first day after my return from the ice I had received, as stated, a mass of telegrams, and they were followed by still more, of varying content, after my return.

A few examples:

An American lady described herself as certainly none too beautiful yet as the possessor of a large fortune, and she made me an offer of marriage on very gracious terms. The letter read in part:

"If no love should develop, I still want to bear your name. I wish to assure you, in advance, that you may have as many other attachments as you wish, if only, as I have said, I may bear your name."

When I told my friends about the contents of this letter, someone suggested that I should not have tossed the favourable offer so cavalierly into the waste basket. Instead I should have proposed to the languishing thirty-five-year-old miss that she might be adopted by the Lundborg family.

An Italian schoolteacher sent me a collection of drawings with accompanying verses. While I was still on the ice, she had proposed to her 10- and 12-year-old pupils that they should compose and illustrate a prayer for me.

A Swedish firm made me the proposal that I should send them a profile photograph of myself, and from it they would design a nutcracker. "For," read the letter, "many a Swede would like to crack his Christmas nuts in your company."

A Danish composer sent me a composition, *Uppland March*, dedicated to Lieutenant Einar Lundborg.

From many other directions I received friendly greetings and congratulations because of the flight the *Uppland* had made to the ice floe. A pardonable mistake.

A Swedish lady who called herself "a former admirer" considered that I had done wisely in going to Spitzbergen and even that it was a fine piece of work to have rescued Nobile; but the

fact that I later had been taken off first and still was fêted in Sweden led her to write: "For shame—such a hero!"

During the period immediately after my return from Spitzbergen, I received a number of invitations from newspapers and societies to lecture, while persons at different places asked me to come to their cities to tell about my adventures. So far as I possibly could, I complied with these requests and was met everywhere by a very kindly and grateful audience, and a cordial press.

I might have continued these tours in Sweden and other countries for a long time—but duty called.

And so work began again at Malmslätt.

APPENDIX

The *Italia's* Doom

SPONSORED by the Italian Royal Geographical Society, financed by the city of Milan, and under General Umberto Nobile's command, the *Italia* set out on its Arctic flight from the Baggio Aerodrome, near Milan, at 2 A. M. on April 15, 1928. The *Italia* was a sister-ship to the *Norge*, the dirigible in which Nobile, Roald Amundsen, Lincoln Ellsworth and others had crossed the North Pole in 1926.

On board the *Italia* were seventeen officers and men, to say nothing of the veteran dog, Titina, which had been the *Norge's* mascot, too. All the men were Italians except the two meteorologists, Dr. Finn Malmgren, a Swede, and Professor Franz Behounek, a Czecho-Slovakian.

The first stop was at Stolp, Germany, from which they took off for Spitzbergen on May 3, and after fighting heavy storms the ship arrived at its hangar at Kings Bay, Spitzbergen, on the 6th.

Shortly thereafter Nobile declared his readiness to start, and on the 11th he made for Lenin Land but, baffled by a fog, was forced to go back to Spitzbergen after eight hours. The *Italia* made a fresh start on the 15th, flying over Franz Josef Land and near Lenin Land, remaining up for sixty-seven hours without making discoveries, before returning over the Polar Sea to its hangar.

The last flight was begun on May 23rd. The *Italia* made the Pole and, after cruising about it for an hour or more, pointed once again towards Spitzbergen.

The weather of May 25 proved fatal, for the lowered tempera-

ture, the fog, and adverse winds resulted in an ice formation the weight of which far exceeded the discharged ballast. At 10:30 A. M. the *Italia* plunged headlong 1500 feet towards the ice. The navigation-cabin gondola containing nine men was crushed by the impact, but the ship itself, holding seven victims, was torn away by the wind with never a sign of their end other than a dubious column of smoke ten miles off. Vincenzo Pomella, chief mechanic, who was alone in the motor-gondola, was killed. Of the occupants of the wrecked navigation-gondola General Nobile and Motor-Chief Natale Cecioni suffered broken legs. The so-called mascot landed on all fours, and valuable supplies were saved.

Russia heard weak radio signals on May 26; they proclaimed the catastrophe and the survivors' plight on the pack ice off North East Land.

Dr. Malmgren with Captains Mariano and Zappi set out from the camp on May 30, hoping to reach North Cape on foot and find aid for their companions. On the way Malmgren was left to die. The whole story of this episode remains to be told.

By June 2 Norway, Italy, Sweden, and Russia had prepared rescue expeditions, and by the 8th the stranded men were in radio communication with their base-ship, the *Città di Milano,* which had arrived at Kings Bay on May 2.

On June 20 the curtain rose on a new act of the tragedy when Roald Amundsen led a searching party in a French seaplane from Tromsö, Norway. Nothing was heard from them after their departure and the only testimony to their fate is an occasional bit of wreckage from their plane.

An Italian aviator, Major Maddalena, who had left Rome in an Italian plane on June 8, sighted Nobile and his companions on June 20. Unable to effect a landing he was at least able to drop supplies to them.

Lieutenant Lundborg landed on the ice in his Fokker plane at midnight of June 23–24 and carried General Nobile away with him. Captain Tornberg, chief of the Swedish expedition, then took the General to the *Città di Milano.* Returning on the same day to

continue his work of rescue, Lundborg's plane overturned upon landing and he shared the *Italia* survivors' imprisonment until July 6 when his aide, Lieutenant Schyberg, appeared in a Moth plane and took him away.

On July 12 a Russian ice-breaker, the *Krassin*, which had been steadily working its way north since leaving Bergen on June 22, rescued all of the *Italia* survivors, including Zappi and Mariano, as well as the fliers from the *Krassin's* own plane, who, assisting in the search, were forced down after having sighted Dr. Malmgren's former companions.

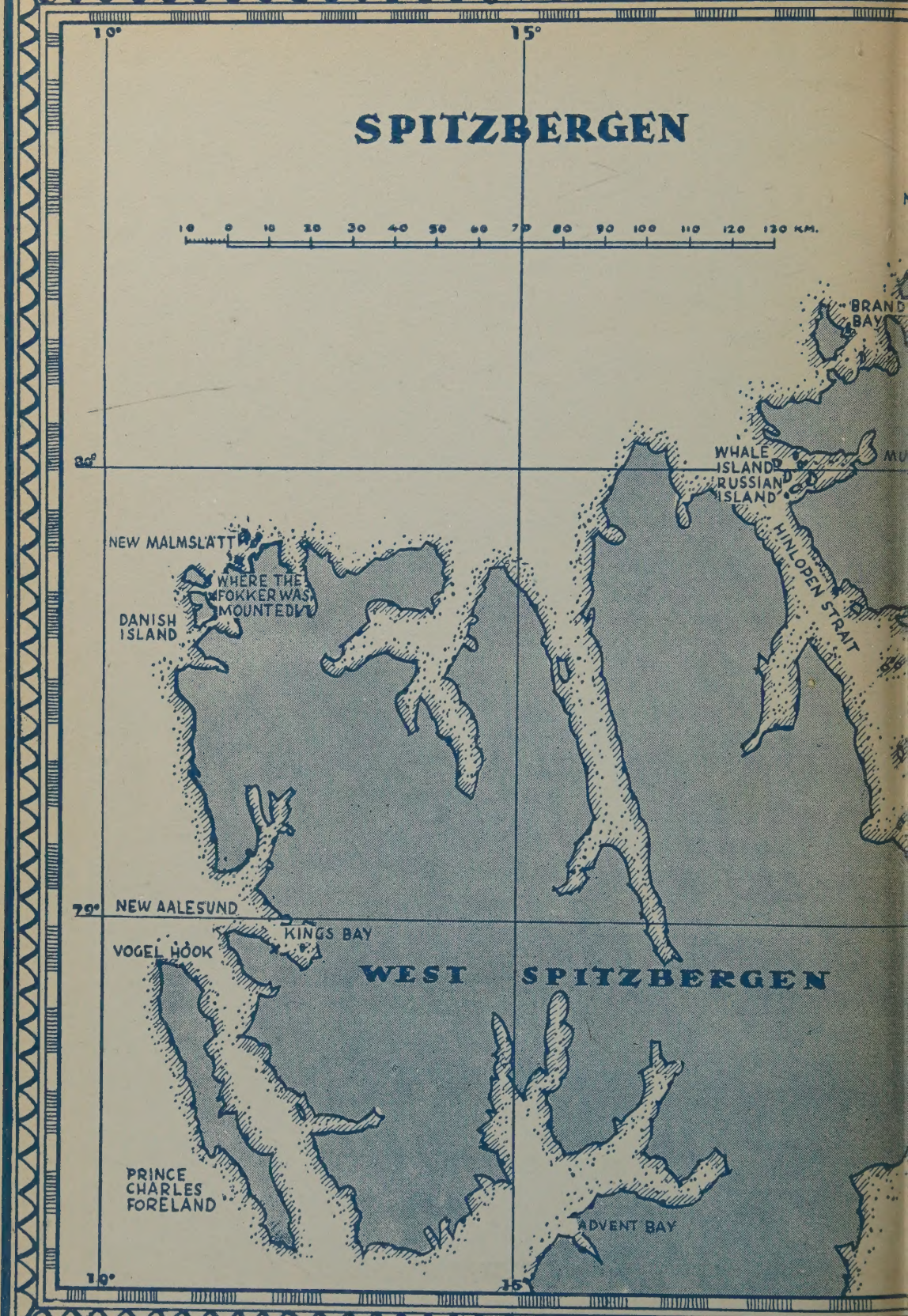
Two of a rescue crew of three, who had set out on foot some three weeks before, were themselves picked up from Foyn Island on July 12 by the Norwegian steamer *Braganza*, and the third was found on the 15th by a searching party consisting of two Swedish military planes and the Finnish plane *Turku*.

On July 18 all forces were concentrated on seeking Amundsen and his associates and the missing members of the *Italia* personnel, nine ships being engaged (4 Norwegian, 3 French, and 2 Russian) and twenty fliers.

The *Krassin* arrived with its human freight at Kings Bay on the 19th. After undergoing repairs it resumed its quest on September 11.

The Italian government officially discontinued the search for its missing nationals on September 12, 1928.

On March 3, 1929, an official committee of inquiry, after sixty sittings, in a report to the Italian Premier, held Nobile responsible for the wreck, and censured him for leaving the ice floe first.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SPITZBERGEN
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BRAND BAY
WHALE ISLAND
RUSSIAN ISLAND
HINLOPEN STRAIT
NEW MALMSLÄTT
WHERE THE FOKKER WAS MOUNTED
DANISH ISLAND
79°
NEW AALESUND
KINGS BAY
VOGEL HOOK
WEST SPITZBERGEN
PRINCE CHARLES FORELAND
ADVENT BAY
10°
15°

25°
30°
CHARLES XII LAND
236 FOKKER LANDING
BROCH ISLAND
FOYN ISLAND
CAPE PLATEN
CAPE WREDE
RIIPS BAY
CAPE BRUNN
37
47A
27
ESMARK ISLAND
306
47B
67
MOTH LANDING
CAPE LEIGH SMITH
86°
GREAT ISLAND
ORTH EAST LAND
AY
150°
180°
150°
ARCTIC OCEAN
NORDENSKJOLD SEA
SIBERIA
NORTH POLE
FRANZ JOSEF LAND
BAFFIN BAY
KARA SEA
SPITZBERGEN
BARENTS SEA
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